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LETTERS

A Necessary World

She of the fevered brow, a.k.a. Sallie Tisdale, has really done it. "We Do Abortions Here" [Memoir, *Harper's Magazine*, October 1987] comes up to my very lowest standards. I really don't know how to express my revulsion at her treatment of abortion.

There is no discussion of why these women, including Nurse Tisdale, feel so awful when they get involved in a practice that in any other culture or time would be direly punished. Is it such a bad thing to admit that the reason they feel these natural emotions, and the reason I feel sick when I think of it, is because it really *is* awful? Dare I say it? Even *sinful*. It is a sign of our humanity that when we commit a despicable deed, we feel rotten, at least at first. After repetition, even the worst of things becomes too easy.

Cancel my subscription.

James Bonk
Silver Spring, Md.

"We Do Abortions Here" was spellbinding. I have worked as a registered nurse for more than twenty years, and I found all my unarticulated feelings, shadowy nuances, and ambivalence about abortions masterfully addressed, sunned, and quintessentially aired by Sallie Tisdale.

When I graduated from nursing school in the mid-sixties, abortions were just beginning to be a controversial surgery. Now surrogate motherhood, sex reassignment, heart transplants—to name just a few medical advances—confront nurses with a barrage of ethical questions never raised before.

Tisdale's article was heartwarming. It was truthful. It was from the mind and heart of one who has come to grips with the world as it is. John Updike defined what is needed as "beautiful." This article was needed. The author has refined the fine craft of telling; she has bared the soul of physiology and anatomy. If Sallie Tisdale is not a poet, she is in danger of soon becoming one.

Helen Pulliam
Oak Park, Mich.

I want to thank Sallie Tisdale for saying what she did. I "suffered" through a saline abortion almost three years ago—suffered because no abortion is a good time, but the atmosphere in which mine was performed was a wicked and cruel one.

I became pregnant due to the failure of a birth-control device. I have always been careful to use birth control, but one time I became a part of the 14 percent failure statistic. When I went to the hospital for my abortion I was the "only" in many respects: the only married woman, the only woman over twenty-one, the only woman accompanied by friend or lover or relative (my concerned mother suffered through the ordeal emotionally as much as I did physically; my husband was out of the country at the time), and the only white woman. The girl beside me on the bench asked if I used birth control. I replied that I did and that this time it had not worked. She offered me her story. This would be her third abortion, she did have one child a year old, and she thought that maybe now she'd try birth control. I

Harper's Magazine welcomes Letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters are subject to editing. Letters must be typed double-spaced; volume precludes individual acknowledgment.

anted to cry for her and the naivete
at got her into this, but my tears
ere devoted to myself that Monday
orning.

I wanted so badly to tell the inter-
ewing nurse that I was different,
at this was a mistake that had *hap-*
ned to me, not one that I had made.
hat the other 59,999-plus might
ve been stupid, but that *I* wasn't,
d that I *had* to do this, that my child
ould be born with severe birth de-
cts, that I could not afford to be a
rent and was not yet ready anyway.
isdale's article allowed me, for the
rst time since my abortion, to realize
at I was *not* different. An abortion is
tragedy for all of us, but we all have
ur reasons for it to be a necessary
ne. We are all victims, whether of
sufficient education or failed birth-
ontrol devices or plain stupidity. I
ope that Tisdale is only one of many
housands of nurses and doctors who
emember that when they empty their
ssue buckets into the trash.

rooke Magid Hart
Grand Lake, Colo.

Abortion is yet another manifesta-
on of the selfish Me Generation. We
ve in a grab-what-you-can-get, dis-
osable, convenience society which
eaches us to "look out for number
ne" and "be good to ourselves."
We're so busy being good to ourselves
at we forget to help others.

We not only ignore the cries of our
llow humans, but we silence those
f the unborn in an attempt to gratify
ur own selfish desires and justify our
ctions with such double-speak terms
s "handicapped," "old," "embryo,"
fetus," and "tissue." Human life—
hether destitute, physically or men-
lly challenged, advanced in years,
r unborn—should never be viewed
s disposable. After the slaughter of
ne unborn, which "inconvenient"
roup will be next?

Although we throw our hearts into
iving coyotes, whales, eagles, and
Coke Classic, we don't even protect
ne posterity of our *own* race. The
reams of screaming fetuses that Tis-
ale describes are not only a manifes-
tion of inner fears and convictions,
ut they represent the cries and

Continued on page 74

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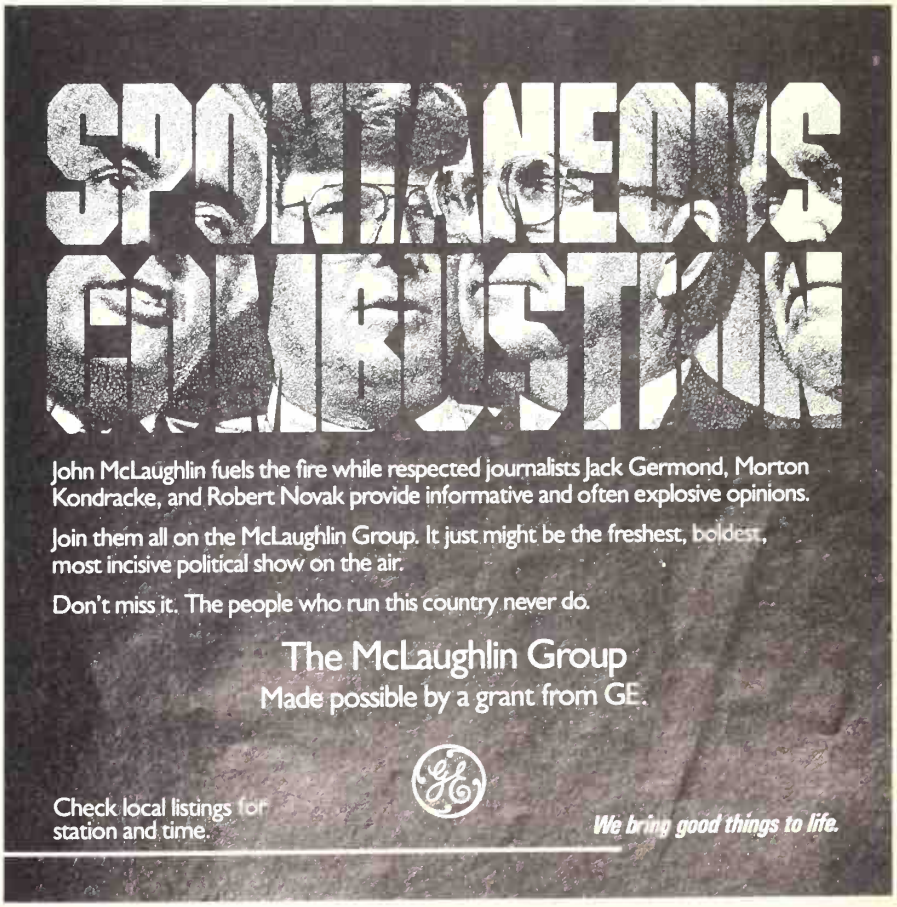
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NOTEBOOK

After Keynes

By Lewis H. Lapham

For the merchant, even honesty is a financial speculation.

—Baudelaire

By chance in a bookstore last month I picked up G. K. Chesterton's set of stories, *The Club of Queer Trades,* which, although first published in 1905, anticipates the problem of the postmodern American service economy. Chesterton caricatures a society so rich and so empty that it has begun to feed on the truffles of its exquisite boredom. He imagines a club in which each of the members invents a new trade providing a preposterous service to a clientele that can afford an equally preposterous price.

An inspired accountant, P. G. Northover, B.A., C.Q.T., sets himself up as an Adventure and Romance Agent. For people who complain about the lack of excitement in their lives, overly civilized people who wish a "glimpse of that great morning world of Robin Hood or the knights-errant, when one great game was played under the splendid sky," the efficient Northover arranges a schedule of "startling and weird" events bound to engage their languid attention. The client sets out for the opera, and suddenly the carriage horses run wild in the streets, dispersing a crowd of flower girls and inciting a riot in Covent Garden. The client takes the night train for Dover and finds himself attacked by a Turkish assassin with a dagger or accosted by a Russian woman wearing sables and a veil.

Another of Chesterton's queer trades is that of the Organizer of Repartee, an artful gentleman who accommodates clients wishing to dress themselves up in the finery of wit. Before going off to a dinner party or diplomatic reception, the client (invariably wealthy but a dullard) memorizes twenty or thirty clever ripostes guaranteed to impress the presiding gentry. The Organizer of Repartee accompanies the client to the evening's entertainment, casting himself as straight man and dressing himself up as an ambassador, a literary critic, or lord of the realm who laughs (very loudly) at the client's jokes or applauds (also very loudly) the client's pronouncements about Germany.

Given the trend of the American economy away from the making of goods (cars, tires, television sets, etc.) and toward the supplying of services (hang-gliding, estate management, tennis-ball maintenance, etc.), we can expect a profusion of queerer and queerer trades. By way of postmodern, entrepreneurial example, I can think of at least four minor enterprises likely to become, with a little publicity and the right sort of tax exemption, major industries.

1. THE PILLOW THROWER

In New York and Beverly Hills the owners of expensive homes never know how to arrange the pillows in their largest rooms. They acquire the correct paintings and the correct furniture, and they often go to the trouble of decorating the premises with the correct pets and the correct celebrities, but somehow the effect is too perfect, too formal, too contrived. Mean-spirited guests remark on the resemblance to a photograph in *Architectural Digest* or an advertisement for a Sheraton Hotel. The owners worry about their lack of human feeling.

Enter the pillow thrower, a joyful and laughing figure who wanders from room to room tossing his pillows with a musician's accuracy of touch and phrase, placing them just precisely so, awakening the rooms with the blooms of color and light. Journeymen pillow throwers might charge $500 an hour, but I imagine that the virtuosi (the happy few deserving of comparison with Leonard Bernstein) probably could earn as much as $2,500 for walking once around a small library.

2. THE DEFENDER OF THE DEAD

Harried by the incessant demands for myths and profits, the mass media over the last generation have debased the coin of history into the alloys of docudrama. Fiction becomes so mixed with fact that in two books published during the same week Joseph Stalin appears as both hero and villain. William Safire and Gore Vidal present portraits of Abraham Lincoln so different from one another as to be scarcely recognizable as the same apparition escaped from the same nineteenth century.

Enter the Defender of the Dead, an attorney working for a contingency fee who brings libel suits on behalf of historical figures so often maligned as Caesar, Catherine the Great, and Hermann Göring.

3. THE PHOTO OPPORTUNIST

Every four years, in the dry season prior to an American presidential election, the world's poorer and more dangerous places become—briefly and for a discerning clientele—as fashionable as a resort on the Côte d'Azur. Candidates for the nation's

ighest office go on political safaris, raveling south and east in search of ne wild guerrilla, the dwarf tyrant, ne gaunt, albino democrat. On the ages of foreign violence, against the ackdrops of poverty and despair, ney perform the operas of self-praise.

In times past, American politicians ave taken their road-show compa-ies to Vietnam, Israel, Berlin, and thiopia. Lately they have felt bliged to tour the banana ports of Central America. Senator Robert ole and Representative Jack Kemp assed through last summer to pose for ne standard photographs. Mayor Ed-ard Koch made the tour in early lovember, and before the election ampaign is over I expect that Shir-ey MacLaine, George Bush, Ivan oesky, Mario Cuomo, and Lee la-occa will follow the same pilgrim ad to geopolitical consciousness.

Because so few of the aspiring atesmen know where to go or whom bribe, they will come to depend pon an enterprising travel agent "We go as Virgil to anybody's Infer-o") who can package the traffic in hoto opportunities. I can imagine a Madison Avenue office decorated ith pamphlets extolling the degrees f political unrest in countries as var-ous as Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Ire-nd, and the Philippines. In place of osters advertising beaches and cruise ips, the walls would be decorated ith large photographs of trackless ungle, labor camps, weapons' stores, efugees, airfields, and bearded men earing green uniforms.

A competent agent could set up ours of a rebel camp or an army head-uarters, arrange interviews with the pposition leader or the presiding des-ot. For a deluxe tour anywhere in the Third World, four days for a party of welve (the candidate, the candi-ate's husband or wife, spokesperson, nterpreter, diplomatic adviser, bar-er, valet, five journalists), the price st might read as follows:

Travel and Accommodations	$50,000
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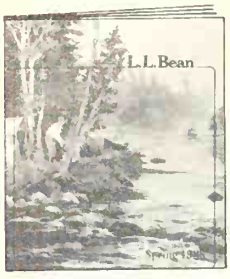

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4. THE MENU READER

In the new and trendy restaurant the management garnishes its menu with an arrangement of adjectives fa more appealing than the arugula o the sun-dried tomatoes. But the wait ers who announce the evening's goo news all too often make a mess of the prose. They spoil the transitions be tween the shrimp and veal, hurry too clumsily into the specials, mispro nounce the names of the forty-sever Italian white wines.

Enter the menu reader—either a man or woman dressed in medieval costume and possibly accompanied by a lute, but always an individual with a distinctive voice who can extract from a list of vegetables the poetry of an Elizabethan sonnet or the urgency of a bulletin from the Persian Gulf.

As the Reagan prosperity continues to drift into oblivion, I think it safe to say that the number of queer trades will multiply as abundantly as the flowers in the field. Within a year the country might recover its place as the world's supreme economic power and the epitome of Western civilization. ■

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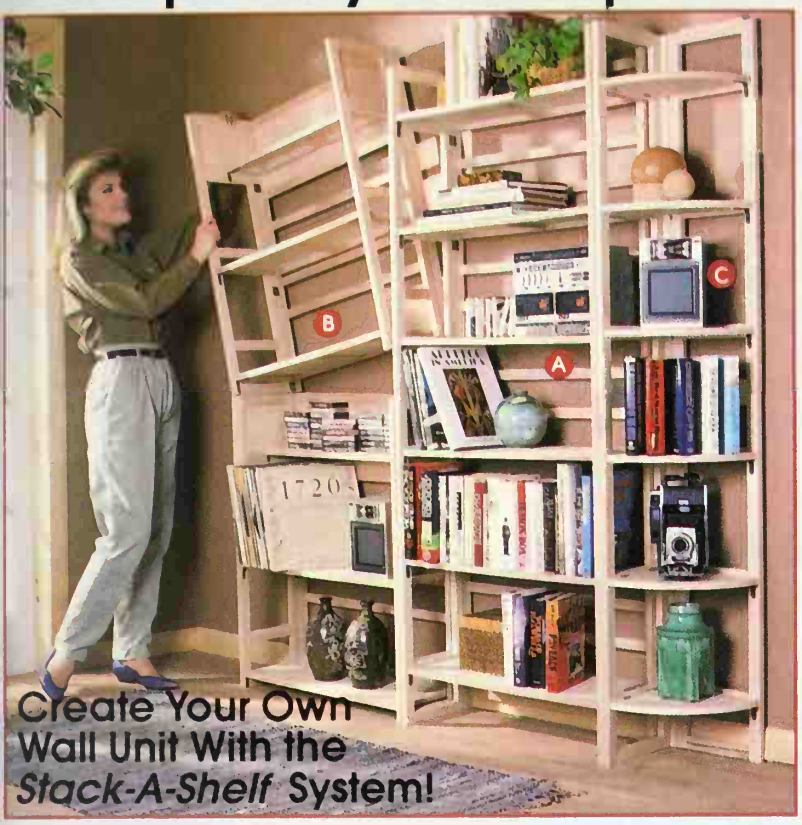

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3 STYLES TO CHOOSE— NEW LOW PRICE

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Perfect for books, display or storage. Sturdy, stackable, sets up without tools and is completely portable. Each unit measures 27¼"w×37"h×11½"d.

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Ⓒ		#1110139	**Corner Unit**	**$29.95**	
				Merchandise Total	
				NY, NJ, PA and MA residents Please add sales tax	
				Please include $6.95 **per unit** to cover shipping and insurance	
				ORDER TOTAL	

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IT is one of the world's foremost producers of automotive equipment.
IT is one of the largest luxury hotel chains in the world.
IT is a leader in defense technology.
IT is an insurance company with assets of $19.8 billion.
IT is one of the fastest growing financial service companies in America.
IT is a partner in the largest telecommunications manufacturing company in the world.

What is IT?

ITT is a 17.4 billion dollar corporation that knows exactly where it is going.

But it wasn't always this way.

A few years ago, we were suffering from a kind of corporate split personality.

There were businesses we could grow that were clearly "Us." And others that just as clearly weren't.

We parted company with many, but held on to those product and service businesses which offered the chance for industry leadership.

Then we went to work to help those businesses grow.

And grow they did.

Last year, ITT Automotive sold the equivalent of more than $100 worth of equipment for every car manufactured in the United States and Europe. And grew more than 30%.

Our Sheraton Hotel chain grew to nearly 500 hotels, inns and resorts in 62 countries worldwide.

Our Defense Technology Corporation

this year will be almost three times the size it was only five years ago.

Worldwide premiums for The Hartford Insurance Group totalled $4.5 billion for the first half of 1987—an 11% improvement over first half of 1986.

ITT Financial Services has completed twelve consecutive years of record revenue and income.

And our joint venture with CGE, Alcatel N.V., gives us 37% ownership in the largest telecommunications manufacturer.

These are just six of the businesses we're in that are already leaders in their fields. We're also leaders in Fluid Technology, Electronic Components, Communications and Information Services and Natural Resources.

The hard work is paying off, with first half of 1987 net income up 60% to $427 million or $2.80 per share, compared to $266 million, or $1.75 per share in 1986.

And we've only just begun.

IT is ITT

BUILDING BUSINESSES INTO LEADERS

HARPER'S INDEX

Total amount of spending Congress approved from 1982 to 1987 : $5,358,000,000,000
Total amount of spending Ronald Reagan requested from 1982 to 1987 : $5,252,000,000,000
Amount the 1988 reduction in income tax rates will cost the U.S. Treasury : $17,000,000,000 (see page 47)
Percentage increase in 1987 in the number of federal convictions for money laundering : 45
Number of Iranian tanks that Iraq has captured and sold back to Iran : 150
Backlog in shipments of rubber gloves to U.S. doctors and dentists (in weeks) : 6
Estimated portion of Zambia's adult urban population that is infected with the AIDS virus : 1/5
Total World Bank aid to African nations in 1986 : $2,937,000,000
Total U.S. aid to Iowa farmers in 1986 : $3,700,000,000
Average number of days Mario Cuomo traveled outside New York State each year from 1984 to 1986 : 16
Number of days Cuomo traveled outside the state in 1987 : 34
Percentage of 18- to 24-year-old whites who voted in congressional elections in 1986 : 22
Percentage of 18- to 24-year-old blacks who voted : 25
Average number of publications issued each year by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission from 1957 to 1983 : 51
Average number the commission has issued each year since 1983 : 13
Priests and nuns expelled from Chile since 1973 : 138
Percentage of Salvadoran government revenues in 1986 that consisted of U.S. aid : 52
Number of individuals currently barred from entering the United States : 2,000,000
Portion of immigrants to the United States who settle in California : 1/4
Percentage of public kindergarten students in Los Angeles who are Hispanic : 62
Percentage of children age 4 or younger living in Israel and the occupied territories who are Arab : 50
Estimated number of babies sold in Naples, Italy, each year : 600
Average price of a baby sold there : $40,000
Percentage of U.S. *in vitro* fertilization clinics that have reported one or more successful pregnancies : 47
Number of workdays lost each year because of headaches : 157,000,000
Pounds of tranquilizers produced in the United States each year : 660,000
Number of cheerleaders in the United States : 600,000
Percentage of recruited student athletes at Division 1 NCAA universities who graduate : 67
Percentage of all students at those universities who graduate : 59
Percentage change in alcohol-related U.S. traffic deaths in 1986 : +7
Rank of the District of Columbia, Nevada, and Alaska in the rate of female homicide : 1, 2, 3
Maximum amount of time women say they want to spend cooking a meal (in minutes) : 30
Maximum amount of time men say they want to spend : 15
Percentage of telephones that are in the kitchen : 31
Telephone calls made and received by Twentieth Century Fox chairman Barry Diller each day : 150
Percentage of water beds that are in California : 13
Number of bedrooms in the United States : 236,800,000
Ratio of real-estate agents to residents in Greenwich, Connecticut : 1 to 68
Number of icebergs in the world : 320,000
Number of snowflakes that have ever fallen on Earth : 10^{35}

Figures cited are the latest available as of November 1987. Sources are listed on page 76.
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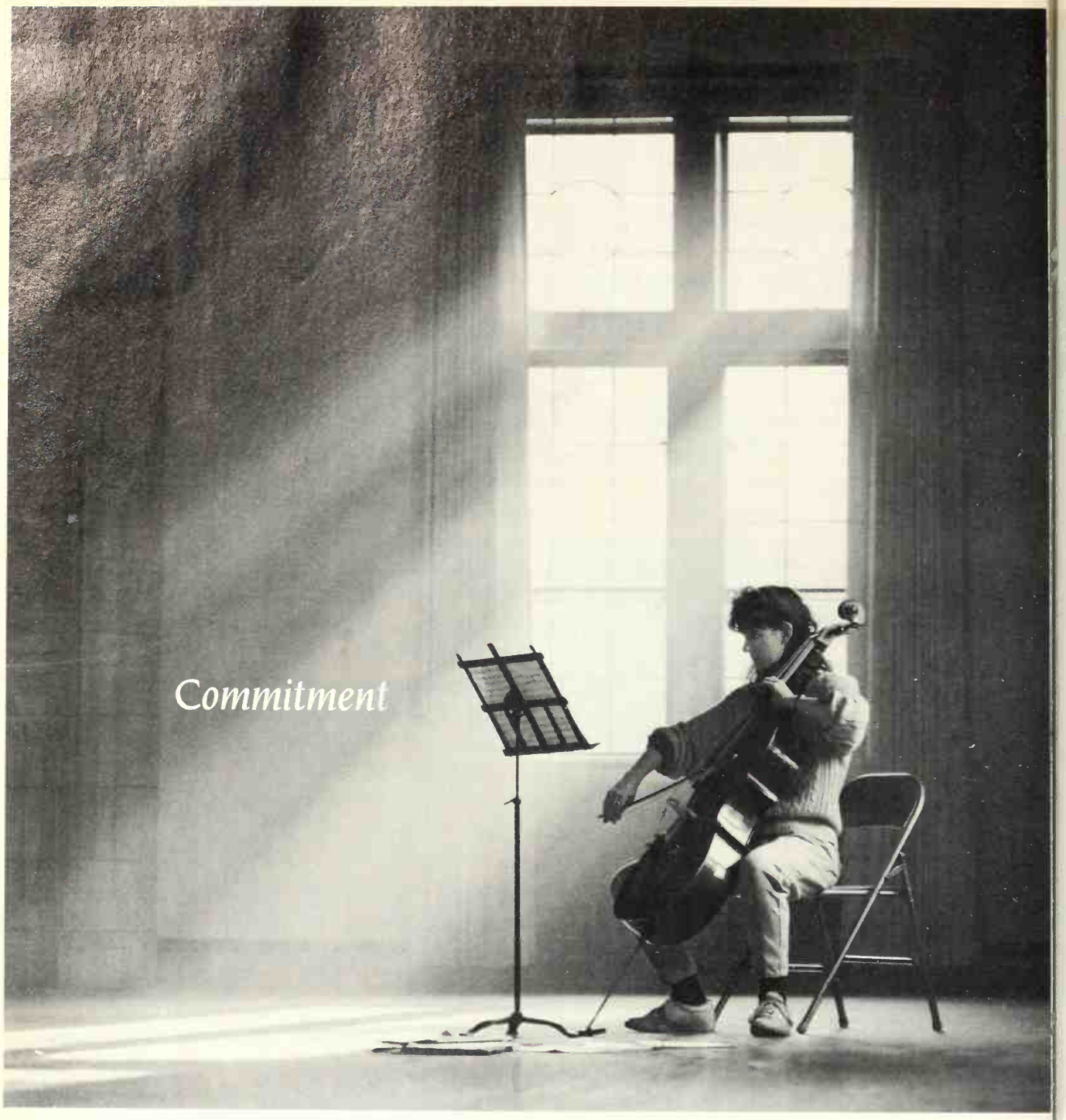


Talent alone is not enough. General Motors realizes the importance of commitment to success.

In recognition of dedicated, talented performers, GM sponsors the annual CBS telecast of The Kennedy Center Honors.

Since 1982, GM has co-sponsored the *Seventeen* Magazine/General Motors National Concerto Competition. We sponsor weekly radio broadcasts of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. We underwrite the PBS telecast of Verdi's *Requiem*, with Luciano Pavarotti.

As a result, GM has been named a winner in the Business in the Arts Awards competition. But that's not why we do it. We support excellence in the arts to honor those who are as committed to excellence as we are.

GM

MARK OF EXCELLENCE

Chevrolet Pontiac Oldsmobile Buick Cadillac GMC Truck

READINGS

[Telephone Transcript]

SINS OF THE FATHER

From Born Guilty, *by Peter Sichrovsky, a collection of interviews with the children of Nazis, to be published next month by Basic Books. Here, Sichrovsky, an Austrian journalist, is speaking with the son of an SS officer about the possibility of an interview. Translated from the German by Jean Steinberg.*

Have you come to a decision about talking to me?
No, I haven't.
Why not?
I don't know what you want to know.
I'm interested in your parents.
Why? There's not much to tell.
Well, let's begin with the little there is.
What do you want to know?
Everything and the truth.
I don't think I can at all.
What?
Talk about my father.
Why not?
Because you probably want to hear that he was a criminal.
Well, was he?
You'd call him that.
What do you call him?
I call him Father.
And what else?
What do you mean "what else?"
What was he before he was your father?
How should I know?
Maybe he was a criminal before he became your father.
Are you trying to insult him?
Maybe.
You don't have the faintest idea who he really was.
True.
He was a soldier like thousands of others.
A soldier in Treblinka?
In the office.
That's what he told you?
Yes.
How old were you at the time?
I think about fifteen.
Why did you ask him?
We'd talked about the Third Reich in school.
What else did he tell you?
That sometimes he also guarded prisoners.
What kind of prisoners?
Don't ask such stupid questions.
Can't you say that word?
Which one?
What kind of prisoners they were.
Okay, Jews.
Why are you shouting?
You get on my nerves.
So?
I'm going to stop now.
All right, hang up.
Okay.
What did he do with the Jews there?
He didn't kill them, if that's what you mean.
Then what did he do?
Guard them.
How did he do that?
He didn't tell me every little detail.
What did he tell you?
He wasn't in the gas chambers.
Don't you wonder?
What do you and I have to do with it?
Not much, except that maybe your father killed my grandmother.

That's ridiculous.
I'm not laughing.
There's nothing he could have done.
What couldn't he have done?
Refuse.
Why not?
Because they would have killed him.
Who's "they"?
The SS, of course.
But he was in the SS himself.
Not voluntarily.
That's what he told you?
Yes.
Who forced him?
I don't know exactly.
Didn't you ask him?
Get off me. It wasn't my fault.
It wouldn't be if you'd asked him.
He wanted to survive, that's all.
By killing others?
He didn't kill anybody!
You don't believe that yourself. He was there for three years.
He was in the administration.
That makes him a desk murderer.
It's terrible, the way you talk about him.
How do I talk about him?
Like a common criminal.
Well?
But he's my father.
So?
Hundreds of people worked in the administration there.
In that case there were hundreds of murderers.
You're bitter.
That's true.
I ask myself, what do I have to do with all this?
Nothing.
Then why do you attack me?
Because you're protecting your father.
Do you want me to attack him?
Makes no difference to me.
What do you want me to do?
Find out the truth.
And when I do?
Then attack him, if that's what he deserves.
My own father?
If he was a criminal then tell him so to his face.
My own father?
I feel sorry for you.
What do you mean by that?
You're pitiful.
Why?
With a father like that.
You're insulting him again.
I don't like him.
But you don't even know him.
I know enough about him.
But he also has a very different side.
Which one?
He can be kind and friendly and nice; and also funny.
What's that got to do with it?
Damn it, you have to deal with your hatred yourself.
And you?
I don't hate him.
He's a murderer!
There you go again.
I'll never stop.
Can't you forget?
Some things, no.
Neither can he.
Poor guy.
He went through a lot.
Like what?
He was persecuted and tried after the war.
Yes, I know, and he was acquitted.
As he should have been.
How do you know that?
I believe him.
What? That he didn't do anything?
Yes.
You're lying to yourself.
And you with your hatred aren't bringing anyone back to life.
Do you love him as a father?
No. I never loved him, but I respected him.
And now?
Now I only feel sorry for him.
Why?
He's old and shaky and can't walk without help; he can't even feed himself.
Are you different from him?
Yes and no.
What do you mean?
There's too much of him, things I don't like, in me, and vice versa.
Do you find our conversation unpleasant?
Yes, very.
Why?
You have an unpleasant way of questioning. You're pushing me over to his side.
I don't want to do that.
But you are. You're using guilt.
How?
If I don't hate him I share the guilt.
No, no.
Oh, yes. You're making it easy for yourself.
What am I doing wrong?
You're playing a nasty game.
Now you're going too far.
You're going too far with your hatred.
I don't understand.
I can forget, but you can't.
You've already said this.
Now I feel sorry for you.
Thanks a lot.
You're the sorry creature.

"Let me through. I'm a chef."

From New Statesmen, *the British weekly.*

Now just a moment!

You're desperate, like a dog who barks and nobody hears him.

You can kiss my ass.

Nobody will help you. Your hatred will consume you, but I'll live.

That's brave talk on the part of the son of a hangman.

You can't insult me.

I know that.

Let's stop. This doesn't make any sense. There's nothing more we can say to each other.

Alas, yes.

Do you really think my father is a murderer?

I don't know anymore.

I just can't imagine it.

Neither can I.

It's mind-boggling.

You're right.

I don't think I'll give you that interview.

As you wish.

Are you sorry?

No.

Neither am I.

I believe you.

I wish you luck. Maybe we'll run into each other sometime.

I don't even know what you look like.

That's true.

Well, lot's of luck.

Yes, to you, too.

[Brochure Copy]

THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB

From "In Celebration of the Merrill Lynch Executive Offices," a brochure handed out during a November 9 reception marking the opening of the firm's new Manhattan headquarters.

The new Executive Offices have been designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, the architects for the interiors of both Merrill Lynch World Financial Center Towers, to have a traditional look, but one that has been stylized to suggest stability and energy.

The thirty-second floor, 21,620 square feet in total, is symmetrical and has four rotundas at each corner with adjoining sitting rooms. Each of the twelve executive offices has been designed to reflect its occupant's personal taste, while complementing the floor's overall design.

The distinctive black and white marble was specially quarried in Roncesvalles, France. The wood paneling in the offices is French walnut from nine trees procured in Switzerland. The grain and special character of each tree has been carefully preserved on each paneled wall, with the veneer matched to create a distinctive butterfly effect. Woods used in the desks and

denzas include East Indian laurel and burled mahogany.

Each of the four galleries has drawings, prints, and lithographs by such living American artists as Jasper Johns and Roy Lichtenstein, selected by the Merrill Lynch Art Committee in consultation with the Viart Corporation and Tom Messer, the director of the Guggenheim Museum.

The Board Room, on the thirty-third floor, features state-of-the-art audiovisual capabilities to enhance management presentations to the Board. For example, the Board table, which is made of Carpathian walnut burl, is acoustically enhanced with special electronics so that Board members can be easily heard throughout the room. The room's technology was designed by the Wilkie Organization and DRC, leading specialists in this field.

The dining facilities on the thirty-third floor can be reached by a special staircase as well as by elevator. Each of the twelve dining rooms, as well as two additional rooms on the thirty-fourth floor, has its own distinctive color and design. For example, one room is furnished in the Chippendale style with blue materials, and another in the Sheraton style with green fabrics.

The thirty-fourth floor features a physical-fitness facility for executive and senior management as part of an overall health-services program, which includes a full-time cardiologist located in the building.

[Transcript]

THE RIGHT TO SHOP

From a segment broadcast on radio station WOR in New York on September 15.

ANNOUNCER: Celebrating the bicentennial of the United States Constitution, this is *A More Perfect Union: Prominent Americans Reflect on Our Constitution.*

MOREHEAD KENNEDY: My name is Morehead Kennedy. In 1979, I was the acting head of the economic section at our embassy in Tehran, and I was held hostage for 444 days. You don't appreciate what freedom is until you've been deprived of it.

When I came home my first instinctive reaction was to go shopping. I sort of sashayed around: maybe I was going to buy this and maybe I was going to buy that, but what I was exercising was purchasing power. The Constitution, we often forget, was designed to ensure that consumers could get a wide variety of things by breaking tariff barriers between the states. These are critical things we often take for granted. Until you've been deprived of them, you don't know what they are.

ANNOUNCER: *A More Perfect Union*, from WOR Radio 710.

[Dos and Don'ts]

THE JOY OF WORKING

From "Welcome to the Corporate World," by Kazue Susuki, in the June issue of PHP Intersect: Where Japan Meets Asia & the World, *a Tokyo monthly. Susuki gleaned the following suggestions for Japanese office workers from employee manuals.*

New recruits who fail to learn all the dos and don'ts of their chosen company can be sure that their bosses will notice and remember when promotion time comes around. Some rules for men include:

☐ Arrive at least fifteen minutes before work begins.

☐ When the day ends and your boss says you can leave, ask your seniors if there is anything you can do for them.

☐ Read books that are relevant to your work for an hour every day at home.

☐ Don't use company phones and stationery for private use.

☐ Let your boss have the backseat in a taxi.

☐ When you meet your boss in the toilet, just nod.

☐ When walking with your boss, keep a half step behind.

The conscientious woman will remember that:

☐ When you bow you should bend your upper body at an angle of fifteen degrees, looking one meter ahead of you; it is very important for women employees to bow smoothly and beautifully.

☐ When you talk on the phone, never forget to smile, even though you can't be seen.

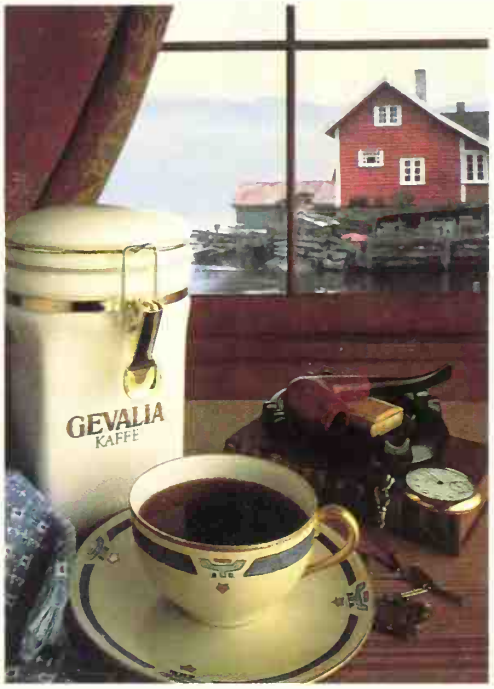
☐ Overtime is not forced on you by the boss; it is done spontaneously from the heart.

☐ Don't read comics on the trains.

☐ Even if you have no intention of becoming a career woman, take responsibility for your own work.

☐ Don't block the entrance to the elevator; walk single file in the hallways.

OF THE FINER THINGS SWEDEN MAKES, THE FINEST MAY BE ITS COFFEE.



The words "made in Sweden" have always stood for uncompromising quality and artistry. From automobiles that set new standards of performance to films that expand the boundaries of creativity. But Sweden's finest hour is said to have arrived with its now legendary coffee, Gevalia® Kaffe.

One fair day in 1853, a Swede named Victor Theodor Engwall fulfilled his lifelong obsession to create a perfect cup of coffee. Rich, full-bodied, without bitterness. As good in the cup as fine coffee smells at the moment of grinding. Good enough, in fact, for the King of Sweden. To this day, Gevalia carries the Royal Seal of Approval.

Indeed, today's Gevalia is produced with the same obsessive commitment to perfection. Coffee growers the world over recognize Gevalia's "Engwall Standard" as the most demanding in the business: only top-quality beans are considered—and even then, only one of every four is found acceptable for Gevalia Kaffe.

Gevalia actually blends up to six varieties of highly prized Arabica beans—from countries like Kenya, Guatemala and Costa Rica—to create its characteristic high flavor notes and delicate nuances. Swedes, after all, feel as passionately about coffee as the French do fine wine.

There's yet another reason for Gevalia's superior flavor: its impeccable freshness. Roasted faster, it's then vacuum-sealed faster—within seconds. Because even the finest whole beans rapidly grow stale when exposed to air, as in gourmet shop bins.

REGULAR AND NATURALLY DECAFFEINATED

Gevalia comes whole bean or ground in a variety of full-bodied roasts. But perhaps the biggest revelation is Gevalia Decaffeinated. Caffeine is removed naturally by gently soaking the beans in water, then treating them with the same natural elements that put the effervescence in sparkling water. The result is full coffee flavor. Drinking decaffeinated is no longer a compromise.

Whole Bean.

Ground.

A REGAL BRIBE

As this exceptional Swedish coffee is not available in mass market quantities, the only way to order is from our Import Service. Just fill out the attached reply form. We will send you the white ceramic Regal Gevalia Kaffe Canister, embossed in gold with the Royal Crest of Sweden (retail value $18.00). It's free with trial membership.

A Regal Gift
$18.00 ret. value

So discover Gevalia Kaffe. And make one of Sweden's finer things your own.

By Appointment to His Majesty the King of Sweden.

GEVALIA KAFFE
A SWEDISH OBSESSION.

©1988 Vict. Th. Engwall & Co. If reply form is missing, for full details please write to Gevalia Kaffe Import Service, Dept. W, P.O. Box 5223, Clifton, N.J. 07015. Or call 1-800-[illegible]

[Painting]

UK SCHOOL REPORT

By Tam Joseph. U.K. School Report is on permanent exhibition at the Graves Art Gallery in Sheffield, England. Joseph's work appears this month in "Comic Iconoclasm," a show at the Manchester Cornerhouse.

[Essay]

WAGES OF DEPRESSION

From "After Hegemony," by Walter Russell Mead, in the Fall issue of New Perspectives Quarterly. *Mead is the author of* Mortal Splendor: The American Empire in Transition.

Call it liberal capitalism, the welfare state, or modern industrial democracy, but the twentieth-century compromise between the working classes and the ruling classes—which represents the underlying reality of political and economic life in the West—has been overtaken by events. In fact, many of the world's current economic difficulties can be traced to the undermining of this historic compromise.

This tacit economic pact, which was made in virtually all countries in Europe and North America, ensured rising living standards and labor peace by balancing the competing interests of labor and capital. Under the terms of the compromise, productivity, wages, and profits rose together. It was Keynes who—following in the footsteps of, among others, Henry Ford—demonstrated that a high standard of living for the masses was necessary to the functioning of a modern capitalist economy. If the masses could not afford the goods they produced, a vicious cycle would begin. Layoffs and wage cuts would reduce purchasing power, and the economy would sink toward a new, and much less favorable, equilibrium. Programs designed to raise consumption and to cushion the individual worker from economic shocks were therefore in the interest of capitalist and worker alike.

Under the aegis of liberal capitalism, the advanced Western countries have enjoyed decades of rapid economic growth and social development. But this system is now endangered. Since 1975, more than 4 million manufacturing jobs have been exported from developed to developing countries. Driving this continuing shift are the enormous wage differentials between these countries. Manufacturing labor costs in the developing world are approximately one-tenth of the costs in the advanced world. It is this movement of jobs to low-wage countries that has undermined the great compromise in the West. As a result, wages and profits have stagnated or fallen. Real average weekly earnings for nonsupervisory workers in the United States have fallen 17 percent since 1973. The living standard of the American middle class has not risen in fifteen years.

Keynes warned fifty years ago that the worst of all policies was to cut wages: there is no course more likely to bring on a depression. And yet that has been precisely the effect of the shift in manufacturing jobs from the First to the

Third World. The international economy has entered a vicious cycle.

Because their workers are paid so little, developing countries lack internal markets; thus to prosper they must run huge export surpluses. Because of this competition and the resulting decrease in domestic demand for their products, manufacturers in high-wage countries are forced to cut labor costs by moving production to the Third World. Wages fall in the developed nations, which further lowers demand, intensifies competitive pressures, and causes even more companies to export jobs.

With consumer demand growing more slowly than the supply of goods, imbalances appear in three areas. Throughout the advanced world, unemployment remains at levels—even during expansions—that were once reached only in recessions. Factory utilization also remains at levels once associated with recessions. And countries in both the developed and developing world, battling to run trade surpluses with as many of their trading partners as possible, flood international markets with their goods.

Even the feverish financial boom of the 1980s can be traced to consequences of falling wages. When wages fall, income is transferred from workers, who spend a relatively high proportion of their income, to investors who, with larger incomes to begin with, have higher savings rates. The medium-term result is an increase in the amount of money available for investment. But the overproduction of so many basic goods makes investment in new productive capacity relatively unattractive, especially in the high-wage countries. Investors in the First World are increasingly attracted to speculative investments and financial instruments. Historically, such markets usually end in a crash.

In classical Keynesian theory, governments could improve their economies with deficit spending: generating new demand would stimulate more production and therefore new revenues. But as Germany discovered in the 1970s, and as France and the United States confirmed in the 1980s, this relationship between stimulation and growth, while not entirely vitiated by changed conditions, is no longer as strong as it was. The demand created by U.S. budget deficits in the 1980s stimulated relatively less growth in the United States than in the First and Third World countries that export to it. Keynesianism in one country is no longer a workable strategy.

For any lasting improvement in the world economy, wages and social spending must rise in developing nations. The great compromise of liberal capitalism must take hold in the Third

[Memoranda]

FAA: THE JEANS QUESTION

From memoranda issued by the Federal Aviation Administration establishing a dress code for its employees at the Los Angeles Air Traffic Control Center. The distinction made in the May 15 memo between acceptable and non-acceptable kinds of blue jeans was protested and later rescinded.

SUBJECT: Facility Dress Standards
PURPOSE: This order establishes policy governing dress standards for air-traffic employees at the Los Angeles ARTC Center.
EFFECTIVE DATE: May 1, 1987
POLICY: Employees shall wear clean and well-maintained attire appropriate for the conduct of government business. This attire should create an appearance which instills public confidence and portrays a high degree of professionalism. In compliance with this policy, it is established that the following attire is unacceptable. This list is not all-inclusive:

a. Faded blue jeans or nondesigner-type jeans
b. Unclean or poorly maintained shoes or sneakers
c. Casual sandals or thongs
d. No socks or hosiery
e. Any T-shirt or sweatshirt without a collar
f. Shirts with slogans or large letter advertising
g. Shorts
h. Clothing or footwear that is not well-maintained or has holes in it
i. Wearing of any type of jeans or sneakers by supervisors during the day and evening shifts
j. Hats

SUBJECT: Facility Dress Standards
DATE: May 15, 1987
TO: All Control-Room Personnel

In order to clarify the Facility Dress Standards that became effective May 1, all control-room personnel are expected to adhere to the following standards when wearing jeans. This list is non-inclusive.

ACCEPTABLE	NON-ACCEPTABLE
Jordache	Levi's (non-designer)
Calvin Klein	Lee
Sergio Valente	Wrangler
Gloria Vanderbilt	Faded jeans (any type)

World or it will fall apart in the First. Jobs will continue to move to low-wage havens, and demand will continue to leak out of the world economy.

Raising wages in the Third World will require the active involvement of First World governments and international institutions. A combination of carrots and sticks would close markets to products made without such minimum wages and would provide financing and free trade to countries and firms that complied with international guidelines.

Essentially, wages must be tied to productivity worldwide—which is not the same as saying that wages must be equal around the world. According to figures collected by the World Bank, manufacturing employees in Third World and newly industrializing countries receive about 25 percent of the value added in manufacturing as wages and salaries, while workers in the Western countries receive 40 to 50 percent. Thus an increase of about 30 percent in annual pay—preferably accompanied by a reduction in hours worked—would bring most Third World manufacturing incomes into a more stable relationship with First World conditions, provided that the "social wage" (local government spending on housing, schools, social-welfare programs, etc.) was raised proportionately. Hourly wages would rise by about $1 in most countries.

Moving toward more equal pay for equal productivity will not only put the world economy on more sound footing; as a policy it has the kind of general appeal around which a political consensus can be built in the United States and other advanced countries. As a "feel good" issue, raising the wages of the super-exploited labor of the Third World gives a coherent and progressive framework for foreign policy. As a "bread and butter" issue, defending the living standards of the American people can win solid support from organized labor. Farmers and miners will support this policy because of its effect on commodity prices; manufacturers will welcome an approach to foreign competition that protects them from low-wage labor without setting off trade wars among the world's advanced economies. Banks with large loans to developing countries will appreciate a policy that offers concrete support and credit-guarantees to overseas borrowers. By including the "social wage" in international labor standards, we will also find a framework to discuss a critical international issue which, thus far, has escaped the full attention it merits—environmental protection.

Linking access to international markets to international standards for wages and working conditions is a policy that can avert a depression, protect the living standard of the American middle class, give coherence to U.S. foreign policy, and promote economic cooperation among the advanced industrial democracies. Democrats and others looking for "new ideas" in 1988 and beyond will be well-advised to consider policies along these lines. For those who believe in economic growth and social progress, there are few alternatives.

[Essay]

BIG BUSINESS TAKES THE FIRST

From "Hogging the Constitution," by Robert Sherrill, in the Autumn issue of Grand Street. *Sherrill is the author of numerous books on politics and business.*

During the two-hundredth anniversary of the framing of the U.S. Constitution, I decided the most fitting way to celebrate it would be to find the most immediate example of our ignorance about constitutional principles. And I think I succeeded. I got my clue from an advertisement that was placed in many magazines by Philip Morris, offering to pay $15,000 to the essayist who best explained why the First Amendment's protections should be fully extended to commercial speech (particularly, of course, to cigarette advertisements).

Naturally, there was a heap of self-interest involved in that public-relations stunt. Philip Morris, the largest cigarette manufacturer in the country and the progenitor of the most famous of the killers, Marlboro, is nervous. The whole tobacco industry is nervous. There's a movement in Congress to ban cigarette ads in newspapers and magazines. Naturally, ad managers for print journalism are pretty nervous too, since a ban of that sort would deprive magazines of about $500 million and newspapers of about $200 million each year.

But there's nothing wrong with self-interest, after all, and in this case it might help stir up a useful debate. As one who heartily opposes First Amendment protection for commercial speech that originates from corporations, I don't expect to agree with a single point made by the Philip Morris essayists, but it is refreshing at least to have the debate finally going on among people in general and not left to the closet doodlings of the U.S. Supreme Court, which for most of the past dozen years has stumbled and lurched toward what I consider a dangerously pro-corporation position.

U.S. courts have, in fact, done virtually nothing to control the modern corporation since it emerged from the primordial economic

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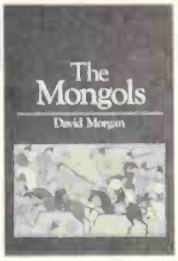

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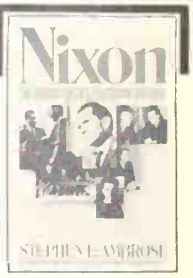

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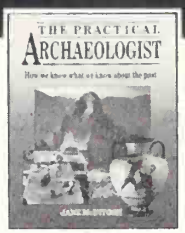

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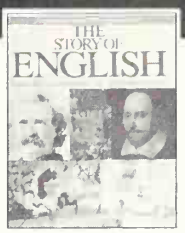

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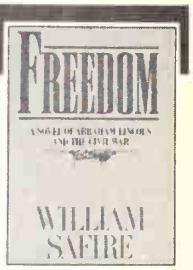

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slime just before the Civil War and began to multiply in awesome numbers and with awesome power. From the seedy Gilded Age up until the 1930s, the courts often literally and always figuratively were in the employ of the corporations; laws that might otherwise have held them in check were "interpreted" out of existence.

The most profitable collaboration between the Supreme Court and the corporations came in 1886. That was the year they pulled off the biggest literary heist in history. That was the year they stole the Fourteenth Amendment.

As everyone knows, the Fourteenth Amendment was created to force the sullen, recalcitrant Southern states to treat the recently freed slaves not merely as black bodies taking up space, not as unwelcome apparitions, but as real *persons*, as *citizens*. As soon as the Fourteenth was ratified in 1868, the corporations began trying to purloin its lovely words for their own use. And no wonder they found it so attractive. The Fourteenth specifically addressed the *states*, and when corporations fought health laws, child-labor laws, sweatshop laws, or when they manipulated land and right-of-way laws, they were usually dealing with state laws. Naturally, it would be to their great advantage to have the full use of the Fourteenth.

But to get it, they would have to qualify as *persons*, which would be difficult inasmuch as the Fourteenth was obviously aimed at protecting only flesh and blood. For hundreds of years corporations had been correctly viewed as nothing but a legal mass of assets, as a legislative concoction of government. But ah! If that view could be legally changed; if the corporations could, so to speak, put soot on their faces and mingle with the ex-slaves as they moved across the threshold into citizenship—what a grand and glorious difference that would make!

Eventually, big business got what it wanted. Arthur S. Miller reconstructs the moment: "The Supreme Court in its infinite wisdom saw new light in 1886. In an otherwise obscure case about railroad regulation, when the lawyers were again trying to convince Their Serene Highnesses that corporations should be persons within the meaning of Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment, Chief Justice Waite stopped oral argument and announced to counsel that he need not discuss the point further. Waite said that all the justices were of the opinion that corporations were indeed legal persons" (*Corporate Power in America*, 1973).

That one court action, Justice Black has correctly said, "has had a revolutionary effect on our form of government." The inequality between white and black that the Fourteenth Amendment was supposed to cure has instead been transformed into perhaps an even greater inequality between the corporate "person" and the natural person.

Since then the corporations have been trying to persuade the courts to extend the generosities of 1886 in such a way as to let them wallow in the First Amendment just as you and I can. Such an extension would, of course, magnify their advantages in political and economic and health and safety debates to a fearsome degree.

The imbalance is already impressive, a fact that is so obvious it has penetrated even the thinking of some members of the Supreme Court who ordinarily are not rated as champions of the little guy. Justice White, for example, who said in *First National Bank v. Bellotti* (1978) that because corporations wield such vast economic power and speak independently of the views of their individual shareholders they "may be viewed as seriously threatening the role of the First Amendment as a guarantor of a free marketplace of ideas."

Bellotti involved a critical issue: Can a state prevent corporate management from spending corporate money to circulate political propaganda that has no connection with its corporate business? The majority of the Burger Court said no, the state cannot. White (joined by Brennan and Marshall) said yes, it could.

Most important to the future of this continuing debate, joining these three in dissent, in a separate opinion, was none other than Brother Rehnquist, who promises to be the unlikely star of the show.

I almost said unlikely hero, but that may be going too far. Rehnquist has such a dismal record on some other issues that he does not deserve to be rated that highly for his service on this one alone. And besides, he may be on the right side for the wrong reasons: perhaps he does not abhor corporations (the right reason) so much as he loves the state too much. He is an extreme statist, with a reputation among some Court observers as a rather slavish cheerleader for government. Nevertheless, he will be enormously useful in this fight, and perhaps can turn the Court around, not only because he has a marvelously dashing, Captain Blood style of writing opinions but because he has a deep reservoir of the right instincts.

Rehnquist is particularly contemptuous of the infamous 1886 decision to make corporations "persons," noting with prudish disapproval that this decision was taken "with neither argument nor discussion." A corporation—which he describes in Chief Justice Marshall's words: "the mere creature of law, it possesses only those properties which the charter of creation confers upon it"—will never win from him the right to play without restriction in political debate.

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As for bringing "purely" commercial speech under the First Amendment, he feels that to be a disastrous mistake. "The First Amendment speech provision, long regarded by this Court as a sanctuary for expressions of public importance or intellectual interest," he has written, "is demeaned by invocation to protect advertisements of goods and services." And advertisement, he has said, is simply "not the sort of expression that the Amendment was adopted to protect" (*Bates v. State Bar of Arizona*, 1976).

Rehnquist also scorns the "marketplace of ideas" concept when applied to commercial speech, believing that "although the 'marketplace of ideas' has a historically and sensibly defined context in the world of political speech, it has virtually none in the realm of business transactions." To him, the difference between the two is quite clear. In the commercial bazaar, ideas are often fraudulent, and their correction, if correction can be achieved, involves complex lawsuits. But "in the world of political advocacy and its marketplace of ideas, there is no such thing as a 'fraudulent' idea: there may be useless proposals, totally unworkable schemes, as well as very sound proposals that will receive the imprimatur of the 'marketplace of ideas' through our majoritarian system of election and representative government."

Finally, Rehnquist believes that state-chartered, state-propped, profit-making enterprises can't have it both ways. Fair's fair. If they insist on being coddled by the state—seeking and receiving "the blessings of potentially perpetual life and limited liability"—then they must accept state control, including control of their speech, for "liberties of political expression are not at all necessary to effectuate the purposes for which states permit commercial corporations to exist." *In Posadas de Puerto Rico Associates v. Tourism Company of Puerto Rico* (1986), Rehnquist came out on top—five to four, his first victory for his commercial-speech position—with an opinion that the government of Puerto Rico had a perfect right to ban casino-gambling advertisements on the island even though gambling is legal there. "It would," he wrote, "surely be a strange constitutional doctrine which would concede to the legislature the authority to totally ban a product . . . but deny the legislature the authority" to reduce demand for the product by banning advertising.

Brrrrr. Philip Morris and pals must have felt a deep chill when *that* opinion came down. Obviously cigarette companies (and liquor companies eventually?) have good reason to fear that if Congress outlaws or greatly subdues their print advertisements to protect the nation's health, appeals for First Amendment protection will arouse scant sympathy from Rehnquist and his allies on the Court.

And that, I think, would be a wonderful eventuality, if in the process of upholding the restrictions on corporate speech, Rehnquist et al. take extra pains to emphasize that at least so far as the First Amendment is concerned, it is high time to reverse the Mistake of the Century and stop pretending that corporations are persons.

The exclusion of corporate speech from the First Amendment should not be because of content but because of source. It isn't what they say but who says it that really matters. If corporate speech gets protection, let it come from the commerce clause or the due process clause or some other part of the Constitution. The First Amendment belongs to human beings and the press, and it should be secured for their use *only*, before this nonsense becomes any more dangerously rooted.

[Editorial]

THE DEADHEAD'S DILEMMA

From "Will Success Spoil the Grateful Dead?" an editorial in the Summer 1987 issue of the Golden Road. *The* Golden Road *is an Oakland, California, magazine for fans of the Grateful Dead. The editorial was written by Blair Jackson.*

Brace yourself. Here it comes.

There's something happening here, and from where I sit it's a bit scary. Maybe you feel it too. In a nutshell, what I sense is that the Grateful Dead are on the threshold of genuine mega-success. The long, strange trip is about to get stranger.

Basically, the Grateful Dead are at a commercial crossroads. Their following has grown steadily over the past several years for reasons we can only speculate about. A lot of it is really just the sort of growth you get when a friend brings another friend, who brings another friend, to shows. But now, all of a sudden, there's a hit album, a music video, sold-out stadium dates, and magazine cover stories. It's no coincidence that this surge in popularity comes at a time when there is a trend toward bohemianism among the young, in part as a reaction against the uptight conservatism of the waning days of the Reagan era. Let's face it: the Grateful Dead scene is an oasis in the desert of American lameness, more now than ever before.

It's fun to see new faces at the concerts. Fun to see the community becoming larger, stron-

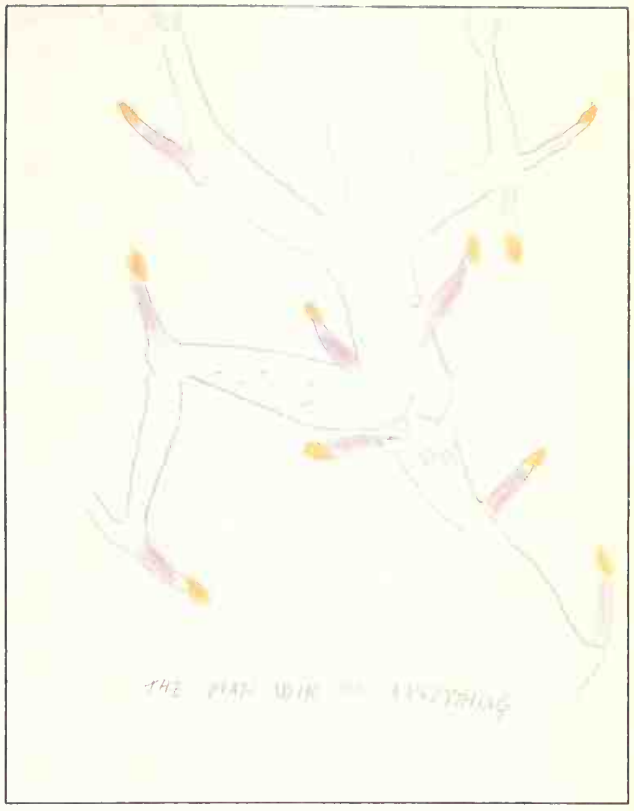
ger, more interconnected in so many ways. But there's an ominous side to all this. Suppose the Dead have a smash hit single. What sort of crowd will that bring in? Well, a lot of cool people will become lifelong Deadheads and our friends in the future. But it will also bring in the element that is attracted by the one hit song they've heard, that comes to a show to hear that song played, and is rude and inattentive until they hear that song (after which they leave). That's not an overstatement. It is an inescapable by-product of mass popularity. The environment of a Grateful Dead concert is always overwhelming to first-timers, no matter how well-prepared they are. My feeling is that most of the newcomers in the last few years were introduced to the band by Heads, but that is about to change. Get ready to encounter a whole new generation of fans who perhaps have no previous connection with either the culture or values of the Dead community. They are going to be on foreign soil at a Dead show, and I suspect we're going to have to be their guides, genially (ahem!) advising them that the quiet part of "Stella Blue" isn't the most opportune time to loudly discuss the pennant race.

I realize that when I write these little diatribes, I cast myself in the role of the elitist snob who wants to keep the scene small and comfortable for himself and his friends. I'll cop to that. What can I say? Small is beautiful—and manageable. The collapse of the Haight following the Summer of Love is a perfect example of the sort of thing that can happen to a good scene that becomes overpopulated. My paranoia is not unfounded, and I suspect that it is shared—perhaps secretly—by a lot of other Deadheads who recognize the scene to be a fragile flower.

It's a tough one. We all want the Grateful Dead to be successful. They've worked their asses off to get to this point and they deserve it. And to say the least, they've never had any sort of master plan for world domination. On the contrary, they've taken many a weird turn away from the mainstream at times when it seemed they were just a step away from breaking through to the masses. But this time it's happening. They're leaping in with both feet. And why not? Aren't you a mite curious to see what happens when Dead culture, with its current strength and numbers, crashes headfirst into America the Weirdiful?

I rest easier at night knowing that at least the album and videos that are intriguing new audiences today are state-of-the-art Dead. This isn't the Starship singing MOR [middle-of-the-road] bullshit and acting embarrassed that they were part of the '60s. It isn't some Summer of Love package tour cashing in on false nostalgia. No, the Dead are still singing about the arms race, sleazy small-time operators, existential angst, and perseverance. The imagery is still mandalas, the tarot, skeletons, eyeballs, and the long guns of war. Just Grateful Dead '87 is all.

I've got to believe that we will get by, we will survive.



By Ettore Sottsass. From the Summer 1987 issue of Normal, *a new quarterly published in New York by Rizzoli.*

TWO INTERVIEWS

President O'Reilly—*From* Summit, *a novel by D. M. Thomas, to be published by Viking in February. Hank Klondyke is "America's most respected political interviewer." Thomas is the author of several volumes of poetry and novels, including* The White Hotel.

HANK KLONDYKE: Mr. President, for the first time since the Bolshevik Revolution, Russia has a young leader, by all accounts an energetic leader. Under the circumstances, wouldn't it have been wiser for you yourself to have attended Comrade Brezhenko's funeral, rather than Vice President Shrub?

PRESIDENT O'REILLY: Sure! The only good Commie's a dead Commie!

KLONDYKE: Pardon me?

O'REILLY: No, I don't think so, Hank.

KLONDYKE: I'm not sure I follow you.

O'REILLY: You want me to speak louder? I have a cold. Maybe old Brezhenko's bug wanted to emigrate and got a lift with Shrub! Oh, we're on the air? Fine . . . Well, no; it would have been impolite not to have seen Prince Diana and Princess Charles off. I don't think a funeral's a good time to get acquainted with someone.

KLONDYKE: How do you see yourself handling Comrade Grobichov when you finally get to meet him?

O'REILLY: What don't you follow?

KLONDYKE: I'm sorry; our lines seem to be crossed, Mr. President. How would you deal with Grobichov?

O'REILLY: Maybe I could teach him a thing or two!

KLONDYKE: He appears to have made an impression on the Vice President . . .

O'REILLY: He's just a greenhorn!

KLONDYKE: The Vice President?

O'REILLY: So he says. Well, time will tell.

KLONDYKE: I'm not sure we're speaking the same language . . . Never mind—I'd like to move on to this crisis in your presidency which has become known, however much we might prefer a more dignified title, as Jerkoff. For the second time in a decade, an administration has been shaken to its roots by a scandal which seemed to begin with something of small moment. In your case, Mr. President, an interview you gave to the Russian poet Surkov. The hostility you have aroused is broadly of two kinds. On the left, people are describing you as a warmonger. On the right —if you will forgive the pun—as a whoremonger. Your aggressive responses to questions about the superpower relations have gravely impaired the NATO alliance. Your prurient responses—as it appeared to many—to questions about your private life have shocked your natural constituency. On all sides there is resentment at what is seen as a cover-up, in the course of the various statements made by you and members of your White House team. I hope that tonight, Mr. President, we can get to the truth of the matter finally. I know you very much want to lay it on the line. So can we begin with the personal matters, some of which involve the First Lady too? I'll ask you bluntly—has the First Lady entertained a lover at Camp David?

O'REILLY: Not the Vice President.

KLONDYKE: I don't think anyone ever imagined—

O'REILLY: Shrub's no greenhorn! Whenever he's had to stand in for me, he's always performed very capably.

KLONDYKE: You mean he *has* slept with the First Lady?

O'REILLY: Hank, people imagine all sorts of things! The whole purpose of this interview tonight is to shed a little reality.

KLONDYKE: What you want to get across, surely, is that you and your wife have had a long and faithful marriage for almost forty years?

O'REILLY: Hell, no!

KLONDYKE: Oh—I'm sorry. In that case you won't mind me asking, equally bluntly—did you commit adultery with Irma Fleming?

O'REILLY: Yes. Absolutely. For forty years, Hank, and with luck there'll be another forty.

KLONDYKE: Well, no one can accuse you of not being frank with us tonight, sir. It may be almost unnecessary to bring this up, after what you've told us, but—yes, these notorious pinup photos—you can see them on the monitor—originally published in a girlie magazine called *Upskirt* in, I think, 1940: I imagine the First Lady wouldn't deny that she's the model? Have you anything to say about them?

O'REILLY: No. Absolutely not. I'm trying to be completely hank, Frank. I'm sorry, I mean frank, Frank. Hank. I'm afraid the lady has been telling a few fibs.

KLONDYKE: Okay, I guess that's enough about that. My own view, and that of a lot of Americans thank God, is that your morals and your wife's morals are your own affair. But when it comes to matters of war and peace, it's very much everyone's affair. During the crisis, the United States has become heavily involved in military action in Central America. Scenes like these on the monitor take our minds back to the Vietnam War . . .

O'REILLY: Yes, I see them. Well, they were tastefully shot. You must bear in mind they were very poor, Hank. You need a few bucks in your purse to be refined. Americans aren't prissy. Good God, we have full-frontal nudes on cable TV! It's 1982, Hank! I'd call them just harmless cheesecake. Even rather artistic. The guy who shot them knew his stuff.

KLONDYKE: I must confess—looking at those scenes—I find your answer somewhat bloodchilling. What do you say to those critics who've accused you of being sadistic? Obviously I'm thinking also of the letter a New York call girl claims you wrote to her when you were a senator. Did you do those things?

O'REILLY: If something has to be done, I don't believe in pussyfooting around.

KLONDYKE: Mr. President—would you ever launch a first strike?

O'REILLY: I'll be very frank with you, Hank.

There are times when you have certain fantasies. Everybody has them—we don't need Freud to tell us that. But it doesn't mean you'd carry them out. I've had fantasies, because I'm only human, but I don't go around putting them into action, I assure you.

KLONDYKE: Mr. President, don't you think the time may have come for you to resign?

O'REILLY: No.

KLONDYKE: Are all your faculties intact?

O'REILLY: No, Hank. I intend to go on fighting for peace and our great country.

KLONDYKE: Thank you.

O'REILLY: I've never felt fitter. I want to assure the people of the United States—

KLONDYKE: We're off the air, sir.

O'REILLY: Thank you.

KLONDYKE: Do you mind if I smoke?

O'REILLY: Oh . . . Well, I guess that cleared the air, Hank. Thanks!

Mayor Barry—*From the transcript of a press conference held by Washington, D.C., Mayor Marion Barry on September 16.*

REPORTER: Your wife has received a great deal of publicity for an interview she gave [in which she discussed reports that Mayor Barry had had an affair with a woman who has been convicted on cocaine charges]. Do you have any regrets that she gave that interview?

MARION BARRY: We have been mayor for nine years, and we have done a great deal to improve the city. Downtown has come alive. It was dying in 1979. We're announcing today the reorganization of public housing. We've had a regional job plan. Our streets are looking better than ever before. Our budget has been balanced for the last six years. . . .

REPORTER: But Mayor, there are reports that that interview and your decision to hold a news conference concerning your ceremonial fund caused infighting in your administration. Do you feel you made the right decision to hold that press conference and your wife made the right decision to give the interview?

BARRY: We're in a strong position. This is our ninth year as mayor . . .

REPORTER: Mayor, but . . .

BARRY: Let me finish. I didn't interrupt you. This is my ninth year as mayor. I'm in a strong position. The citizens have great faith in our ability to lead our city. There are vast improvements everywhere, so we're operating from a position of strength, not a position of weakness. I'm one of those mayors whose management style is to allow free and unlimited debate, to a point. But once the debate is over, I'm the bottom line. I take full responsibility for everything in my administration: the good, the bad, and the ugly . . . and that's the end of that.

REPORTER: Mayor, are you growing frustrated with all the reports coming out concerning the probe?

BARRY: I have been mayor about nine years, and I love every day of this job. I think the people are appreciative of the kind of leadership I have provided, and we intend to provide even better leadership because we get better as we get older. I have put twenty-six years of my life into public service, and intend to continue this term for three years and four months and decide in 1989 or so if I have enough left.

REPORTER: Mayor, how long have you been mayor?

BARRY: Nine years . . .

REPORTER: Mayor, would it be safe to say you're not going to answer that question?

BARRY: I answered the question satisfactorily.

REPORTER: There's an investigation by the FBI that police are skimming drugs from dope deal-

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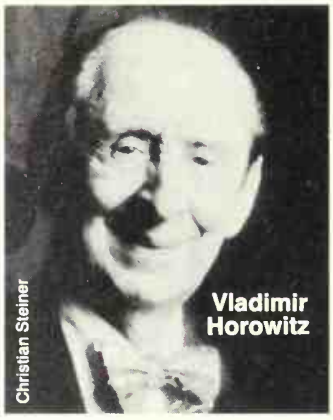

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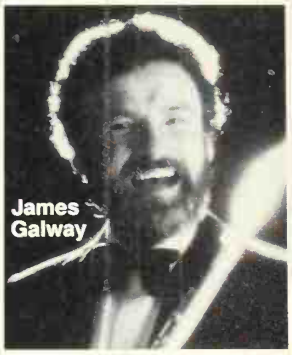

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From a portfolio of photographs by Jeffrey L. Rotman in the November Smithsonian. *Rotman took these pictures of Red Sea fish by lying motionless underwater until the fish swam into the range of his macrolens camera. Clockwise from lower left are the eye of a grouper, a parrot fish, a wrasse, and a cornetfish.*

ers. Do you have any indications that is true?

BARRY: I'm not going to comment about anything before the grand jury, but let me say that crime is down 30 percent in the last four years. We have had a war on drugs. We have arrested some 23,000 people in Operation Clean Sweep. Our police officers are out working hard every day trying to make this city a little bit safer for us to live in . . . and that's a record that I'm proud of.

REPORTER: Mr. Mayor, can we get back to Effi Barry for a minute?

BARRY: She's my wife.

REPORTER: Yes sir. I know that, sir. Do you feel that her talking about all these personal things has hurt your administration?

BARRY: Our administration is in a strong position. We're working daily to manage the government. We have a budget of $3.3 billion and 40,000 employees. And I'm putting in fourteen to sixteen hours a day, and Effi has tolerated me not being home when I should be, and Christopher has been very supportive. And we love each other. Thank you.

[Essay]

AGAINST DINNER PARTIES

From "Against Joie de Vivre," *by Phillip Lopate, in* The Pushcart Prize, XII: Best of the Small Presses, *edited by Bill Henderson. Lopate's essay originally appeared in* Ploughshares. *His latest novel is* The Rug Merchant.

I am invited periodically to dinner parties and brunches—and I go, because I like to be with people and oblige them, even if I secretly cannot share their optimism about these events. I go, not believing that I will have fun, but with the intent of observing people who think *a dinner party* a good time. I eat their fancy food, drink the wine, make my share of entertaining conversation, and often leave having had a pleasant evening. Which does not prevent me from anticipating the next invitation with the

same bleak lack of hope. To put it in a nutshell, I am an ingrate.

Although I have traveled a long way from my proletarian origins and talk, dress, act, and spend money like a perfect little bourgeois, I hold onto my poor-boy's outrage at the "decadence" (meaning, dull entertainment style) of the middle and upper-middle classes; or, like a model Soviet moviegoer watching scenes of prerevolutionary capitalists gorging caviar, I am appalled, but I dig in with the rest.

Perhaps my uneasiness with dinner parties comes from the simple fact that not a single dinner party was given by my solitudinous parents the whole time I was growing up, and I had to wait until my late twenties before learning the ritual. A spy in the enemy camp, I have made myself a patient observer of strange customs. For the benefit of other late-starting social climbers, this is what I have observed:

As everyone should know, the ritual of the dinner party begins away from the table. Usually in the living room, hors d'oeuvres and walnuts are set out, to start the digestive juices flowing. Here introductions between strangers are also made. Most dinner parties contain at least a few guests who have been unknown to each other before that evening but whom the host and/or hostess envision would enjoy meeting. These novel pairings and their interactions add spice to the post mortem: who got along with whom? The lack of prior acquaintanceship also ensures that the guests will have to rely on and go through the only people known to everyone, the host and hostess, whose absorption of this helplessly dependent attention is one of the main reasons for throwing dinner parties.

Although an after-work "leisure activity," the dinner party is in fact a celebration of professional identity. Each of the guests has been pre-selected as in a floral bouquet; and in certain developed forms of this ritual there is usually a cunning mix of professions. Yet the point is finally not so much diversity as commonality: what remarkably shared attitudes and interests these people from different vocations demonstrate by conversing intelligently, or at least glibly, on the topics that arise. Naturally, a person cannot discourse too technically about one's line of work, so he or she picks precisely those themes that invite overlap. The psychiatrist laments the new breed of ego-less, narcissistic patient who keeps turning up in his office; the college professor bemoans the shoddy intellectual backgrounds and self-centered ignorance of his students; and the bookseller parodies the customer who pronounced "Sophocles" to rhyme with "bifocles." The dinner party is thus an exercise in locating ignorance—elsewhere. Whoever is present is ipso facto part of that beleaguered remnant of civilized folk fast disappearing from Earth.

The group is asked to repair to the table. Once again they find themselves marveling at a shared perception of life. How delicious the fish soup! How cute the stuffed tomatoes! What did you use for this green sauce? Now comes much talk of ingredients, and credit is given where credit is due. It is Jacques who made the salad. It was Mamie who brought the homemade bread. Everyone pleads with the hostess to sit down, not to work so hard—an empty formula whose hypocrisy bothers no one. Who else is going to put the butter dish on the table? For a moment all is quiet, except for the sounds of eating.

I don't expect the reader to agree with me. That's not the point. Unlike the behavior called for at a dinner party, I am not obliged sitting at my typewriter to help procure consensus every moment. So I am at liberty to declare, to the friend who once told me that dinner parties were one of the only opportunities for intelligently convivial conversation to take place in this cold, fragmented city, that she is crazy. The conversation at dinner parties is of a mind-numbing caliber. No discussion of any clarifying rigor—be it political, spiritual, artistic, or financial—can take place in a context where fervent conviction of any kind is frowned upon, and the desire to follow through a sequence of ideas must give way every time to the impres-

[Poem]

YOU ASKED FOR IT

By Floyd Skloot, in the Autumn issue of NER/BLQ. *Skloot lives in Portland, Oregon.*

Show me film clips of William McKinley.
Show me Charles Atlas pulling six autos
down two miles of road. I would like to see
the vault at Fort Knox, chimps with
  hammertoes,
a man boning chickens while blindfolded.

Show me Ebeye Atoll, near Kwajalein,
worst slum in the Pacific. Show me red
squill being made into rat poison, pain-
free surgery as performed in Shansi,
old friends playing poker underwater.

Then show me love as it was meant to be.
Show me an old man and his grown daughter
walking alone near a cranberry bog,
not the Robot Man and His Robot Dog.

sionistic, breezy flitting from topic to topic. Talk must be bubbly but not penetrating. Illumination would only slow the flow.

What do people talk about at such gatherings? The latest movies, the priciness of things, word processors, restaurants, muggings and burglaries, private versus public schools, the fool in the White House (there have been so many fools in a row that this subject is getting tired), the undeserved reputations of certain better-known professionals in one's field, the fashions in investments, the investments in fashion. What is traded at the dinner-party table is, of course, class information. You will learn whether you are in the avant-garde or rear guard of your social class, or, preferably, right in step.

As for Serious Subjects, dinner-party guests have the latest *New Yorker* in-depth piece to bring up. People who ordinarily would not spare a moment worrying about the treatment of schizophrenics in mental hospitals, the fate of Great Britain in the Common Market, or the disposal of nuclear wastes, suddenly find their consciences orchestrated in unison about these problems, thanks to their favorite periodical—though a month later they have forgotten all about it and are onto something new.

The dinner party is a suburban form of entertainment. Its spread in our big cities represents an insidious Fifth Column suburbanization of the metropolis. In the suburbs it becomes necessary to be able to discourse knowledgeably about the heart of the city, but from the viewpoint of a day-shopper. Dinner-party chatter is the communicative equivalent of roaming around shopping malls.

Much thought has gone into the ideal size for a dinner party—usually with the hostess arriving at the figure eight. Six would give each personality too much weight; ten would lead to splintering side-discussions; eight is the largest number still able to force everyone into the same compulsively congenial conversation.

Later, however—to give the devil his due—when all retire back to the living room, the strict demands of group participation may be relaxed, and individuals allowed to pair off in some form of conversational intimacy. But one must be ever on the lookout for the group's need to swoop everybody together again for one last demonstration of collective fealty.

The first to leave breaks the communal spell. There is a sudden rush to the coat closet, the bathroom, the bedroom, as others, under the protection of the first defector's original sin, quit the party apologetically. The utopian dream has collapsed: left behind are a few loyalists and insomniacs, swillers of a last cognac. "Don't leave yet," begs the host, knowing what a sense of letdown, pain, and self-recrimination awaits. Dirty dishes are, if anything, a comfort: The faucet's warm gush serves to stave off the moment of anesthetized stock taking—Was that really necessary?—in the sobering silence which follows a dinner party.

[Short Story]

PREPARATIONS

By Kenneth Bernard. From The Maldive Chronicles, *a collection of Bernard's stories published by PAJ Publications in New York City. "Preparations" originally appeared in* Grand Street.

I tend to become absorbed with possibilities other people find absurd. For example, what if the telephone rings while you are standing naked after a shower? Come quick, your child is unconscious. She is a block away. She has a chronic illness. You know what she needs. What do you do? Take the medication you need and rush over naked? Or take the extra minute to put on clothes? Which might be a fateful minute: you arrive dressed but too late. Put it in all its variations—you are making love, in conference, on the toilet, late for an appointment, about to eat: *somebody needs you at once*—the vast majority of mankind would arrive too late. Yet what good citizen, yourself included, would hesitate to smile at the man or woman who ran naked through the street? It simply is not done.

Obviously I am not talking nonsense. But thinking this way does make nonsense of my life. Looking at friends, I wonder, "Would you rush naked to my dying side?" It is, of course, like much else, a metaphor. There are many ways to be naked. How many, and which, trivial things come between you and life? Are they really trivial? Are they perhaps life itself (which would require some serious rethinking)? But people do die. Terrible things do happen. Thus much of my internal life is spent *rehearsing* what I would do in certain circumstances. And I confess that I find myself wanting. I am forced to pay more attention to certain *small* things about myself (you can well imagine what) and take my measure anew. And, in a philosophical way, I am aghast, I mutter, I smile even—how odd life is, what a coward I am, what a solid member of society.

I came to these reflections upon hearing of a certain Ukrainian woman I had seen around, a wife, illiterate. Her husband had heart trouble but was getting along. Friends were visiting, former students, a colleague. She was in the bed-

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"Taking Inventory on the Dumont Farm, Wellman, Iowa, 1985," by Stephen Shames. Shames's photograph appeared in "Manifest Destiny: Unsettling America's Farmers," a show at the Light Factory in Charlotte, North Carolina, last fall.

room, changing. There was a loud knock: "Anya! Come quick! It's Fred!" (He was not Russian.) She came out instantly and rushed to the parlor. She was wearing only her underpants. She was fifty-five, much overweight, not pretty. Her breasts hung. Her stomach revealed its folds. Under her arms, at her back, was fat. She went to her husband, knelt, spoke maybe ten words which no one heard, and he died. Of course, I thought, a peasant. She could do that. It didn't matter. But that was not so. She was, I found out, illiterate only in English, was, in fact, quite educated, had even, in her youth, published a book of poems. And that bothered me, as well as a number of others things. I might as well list them. They have no order.

1. What language did she speak to him in, and did it matter? Did Fred understand Russian? Is it possible that he did not understand Russian, that she nevertheless spoke in Russian, and that it was right that she did so, that is, that Fred heard more and better because he did not understand and died with as much grace as possible? (What language did she use when they made love? There is a question here, but irrelevant.)

2. Obviously, had she put on a bathrobe, her husband would have been dead when she got to him. Would it have mattered, and if so, how much, and to whom? Not to Fred, certainly. The great evaders of life would no doubt quibble in this matter, missing the point entirely, e.g., she could have put on her bathrobe in transit, so to speak.

3. The people there (some were female)—they must have been shocked, perhaps more so at her nakedness than Fred's death. Did they find her gross? Ludicrous? Obscene? Would it have been easier for them had she been younger, slimmer, firmer, prettier?

4. Did Fred see their disgust at her nakedness? Was he, also, perhaps shocked? Did he appreciate the extraordinary swiftness, I might even say nakedness, of her response? Or would he have preferred to die more decorously, unspoken to by a fat and naked wife in full view of students, colleagues, friends?

5. When Anya finally got up, did she look at any of them? Did *she* suddenly feel naked? How did she walk out, as she must have, to get dressed (some things we always finish, if we live)? Did any one of them touch her, put an arm over her, perhaps hold her? Did anyone think to cover her, and if so, did she think, how *ridiculous*, he is *dying*! May you choke on my flesh!

6. Was she sweating? Or was she cold as ice? Did she smell?

7. What had she looked like when young? Were there children? Why had I, before this incident, thought her a peasant? Why wasn't her English better? What were her poems about? Had they been translated?

8. The incident, I am sure, is etched inside the skulls of those who were privileged to bear witness. Does it remain sharp-edged, uncomfortable, troubling? Do they keep up the relationship? Do they avoid her, drop her? Does she retreat to her *Russians*, her language family? If she had been *completely* naked, could they have lived, on any terms, with the memory? (What is the memory of those who hear the sounds and see the bodies of the mutilated of the world?)

9. How do they retell the story? What recedes, what becomes highlighted? Do they laugh more with each retelling? Or does the sour taste remain? Do they wonder about their own deaths, who will or will not be present and why? Will they, the next time, be among the dying, the present or the absent?

This woman is a mystery to me. She has something I do not have, and I do not know why. She had come to her dying husband and grasped his heart in her raw hand. It is the nature of civilization, of any culture, in fact, to interpose *things* (clothing, manners, systems of thought) between people and *life*, by which I mean the hidden life that simmers or bubbles beneath the surface like some molten pool out of dim time. The savage, I realize, is no different from me. Reduction is everywhere the law, perhaps the necessary law: there is no game without it. I wear my clothes; the savage carries his feather or magic pebble. We both suffer grievous loss for it; sometimes we even die for it. Only individuals escape, but who they are, how and why, I do not know. But I recognize their superiority, as I recognize the tragic limits and realness of my own *hesitations*: the measure of any civilization is in its hesitations, its pauses, its reservations. Outside of them is wildness, lawlessness, that is as frightening and lonely as it is free. And it is there that Anya is situated.

I have come to bear her a kind of cosmic love. I do not speak to her, but I have made certain modifications in my life to accommodate her existence. They are modest, to be sure, but I think they move in the right direction. For example, I don't sleep as well. It is conscious, on my part. I am deliberately more likely to awaken at a moment's notice. I am not about to go running anywhere *naked*, with my backside, so to speak, unwiped, but I definitely sleep less well. And, oddly, I *dream* much more. Also, I eat differently. For years, it was my custom, when the telephone rang at dinner, to have my wife answer and say we were eating, could they call back. For a while I considered leaving it off the hook at dinner but thought my regular callers might eventually feel rebuffed. But now, when it rings, my wife (who is watching me carefully) says, "Just a moment," and there I am, quickly swallowing my microcosm of food, ready for whatever it is. It is trivial, perhaps even silly, yet I feel *proud*, a little more than proud, possibly a bit mad. If ever I were to die, it would be so comforting to me to have fat Anya, naked, kneeling, hovering over me, sweating like a pig, muttering incomprehensible guttural sweet Russian to me. If I could speak, I would answer, oh, so happily, "*Yes. Yes. I know. You are right. Hold me, Anya.*" And it would be all right. ■

[Poem]

THE FUNCTION OF WINTER

By Jay Parini. From Town Life, *a collection of his poems published this month by Henry Holt.*

I'm for it, as the last leaves shred
or powder on the floor, as sparrows find
the driest footing, and November rains
fall hard as salt sprayed over roads.
The circulating spores take cover
where they can, and light runs level
to the ground again: no more the vertical
blonde summer sheen that occupies a day,
but winter flatness—light as part of things,
not things themselves. My heart's in storage
for the six-month siege we're in for here,
laid up for use a little at a time
like hardtack on a polar expedition,
coveted though stale. Ideas, which in
summer hung a crazy jungle in my head,
subside now, separate and gleam in parts;
I braid them for display on winter walls
like garlic tails or onions, crisp bay wreaths.
One by one, I'll pluck them into spring.
If truth be told, I find it easier
to live this way: the fructifying boom
of summer over, wild birds gone, and wind
along the ground where cuffs can feel it.
Everything's in reach or neatly labeled
on my basement shelves. I'm ready to begin
to see what happened when my heart was hot,
my head too dazzled by itself to think.

ALONG THE STREETS OF TEHRAN

Life under Khomeini

By John Simpson

We shook hands in the dark, my friend and I, standing on the doorstep of his house. Behind him, in the passageway, carpets glowed in the faint golden light of a lamp, and books glimmered on the walls as we said our good-byes. We had passed an enjoyable evening talking about the state of the outside world, and he had given me the latest news of our friends in Iran. The dinner had been good, too: *chelo kebab* and a pomegranate sorbet, in a quiet restaurant not far away. It would be months, perhaps longer, before I would be back in Tehran, and we would see each other again. But my friend was not one to parade his emotions: having shaken my hand, he turned and went inside. The lock clicked audibly before I was five yards down the road.

Like most people who go by car around a city, I had no idea how long it would take to walk to where I wanted to go. The journey to his house from my hotel—the Intercontinental, now renamed the Laleh, *laleh* meaning tulip, the flower of martyrdom—had taken twenty minutes by taxi in Tehran traffic earlier that evening; but I didn't want to taxi back. I wanted to walk in Tehran, and do some observing and thinking.

My friend thought it would take me an hour to walk to the hotel, a poor estimate, as it turned out. I headed off optimistically, walking fast and sampling the warm night air—air laced with that faint, agreeable savor I think of as characteristic of Iranian cities: the smell of heat and sun-dried brick and cow dung. Around me in the darkness was the sound of voices.

John Simpson is the diplomatic editor of BBC television news. His book Inside Iran *will be published later this year by St. Martin's Press.*

Persians are among the most sociable people on earth, and at midnight they are still to be found on the Tehran streets, chatting to acquaintances, parading up and down, driving slowly around to see what's going on. It was this way at the time of my first visit, in the months before the Shah quit Iran in January 1979. And it remains so, despite the Islamic Revolution and all that the revolution has changed. Since the revolution, I have visited Iran a number of times. I believe I have come to know the country as well as anyone can without actually living there; I have traveled around Iran freely and at will, and have established a network of friends and contacts—supporters and opponents of the regime alike. I have developed an abiding love for the people of Iran, which no amount of fanaticism or cruelty, and there has been much of both, has altogether killed.

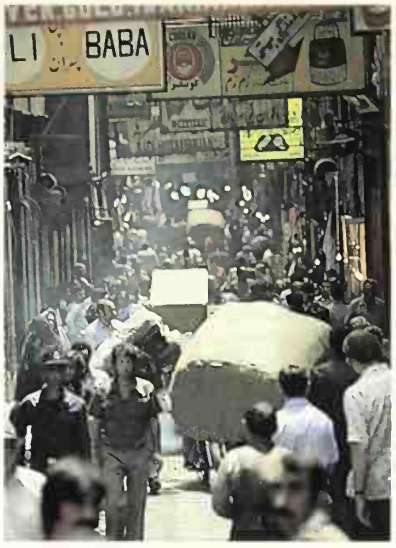
It is impossible for me, and perhaps any non-Muslim of the West, to accept the revolution in Iran entirely on its own terms: it constitutes too much of a challenge to Western values. The Islamic Republic of Iran is not a Western democracy, and the country's leaders have no intention of creating one. The republic, established after the overthrow of the Pahlavi monarchy, is based not on Enlightenment principles but largely upon Islamic principles formulated in the seventh century and little understood, much less accepted, in the West. The revolution was consolidated brutally. All political parties that opposed the Islamic Republic were eventually banned. There were executions not only of former members of the Shah's army and secret police but of many who had participated in the Shah's overthrow—members of moderate and left-wing parties, intellectuals, and so on.

o one is sure how many men
ıd women were executed in
e first years of the revolu-
ɔn; Amnesty International
ıs learned of 2,444 execu-
ɔns in the second half of
981 alone.

I cannot simply accept this.
ıt I have found it equally
ıpossible to accept the
emonization of Iran that
ıs taken place in the West,
ıd in the United States in
rticular: the caricature pro-
cted by politicians and com-
entators who imagine Iran
be a crazed wasteland of fa-
ıtics and their victims, a
ɔuntry governed by madmen
ıd peopled by their unquestioning followers.
he truth is, as always, much more complicat-
l. No matter how some among the Shi'ite mul-
hs—who are still the political driving-force of
e country—might wish to return Iran to the
venth-century ethic of the Holy Koran, it has
ɔt proved possible in practice; the complex,
btle-minded culture of the Persians has en-
red that. People obey the rules outwardly, be-
ıuse the penalties for disobedience are
ɔnsiderable; but men and women in Iran and
particular Tehran, which I have come to
ıow best during my stays, live in a variety of
ıys, guided by a variety of desires, values, and
terests. In this way, they are not so different
ɔm you and me.

And this is especially true now—now that
e post-revolution terror appears to have run
s course, and since Ayatollah Khomeini's
velve-point declaration, made at the end of
982, that people are to be allowed to lead lives
private as they wish. Families split by the rev-
ution are beginning to coalesce again. Some
iles are trying to make their peace with the
ıthorities, returning if only for a visit. Among
ıe middle class, at least, there is less praying,
wer visits to the mosque. Everywhere, there
e signs that the early revolutionary fervor has
ıned.

The caricaturing of Iran not only blurs the
ɔmplexity of the country but serves to erase its
story, and our role in it. What extremism
ıere has been must be understood—perhaps
ıiefly understood—as a response to the way
ıe West once behaved in Iran. The revolution
f 1978–79 was largely a reaction to the corrup-
ɔn and the impatient Westernization that had
ıaracterized the last half-dozen years under the
ıah; but beyond that, it was a rebellion against
century of virtual colonialism by Britain, and
ter by the United States, who together gave



Iran its rulers and governed through them from London and then Washington. In Iran before the revolution, the press was muzzled, as were independent political parties; and SAVAK, the fearsome secret police, was responsible for countless tortures and deaths. Over the years both Britain and the United States helped the Shah defeat the more moderate forms of opposition to this state of affairs. And that made the emergence of Khomeini's far fiercer Islamic opposition something of an inevitability.

Who on either side of the Atlantic now remembers that the British joined with Stalin to dismember Iran during World War II, deposing Reza Shah in 1941 and placing his son Mohammad Reza on the Peacock Throne? Or that the CIA, with British help, engineered the overthrow of the lawful government of Mohammad Mossadeq in 1953 and brought back the Shah after he had fled the country? Or that Washington demanded and received for its military personnel legal immunity in Iranian courts if they committed crimes in the country? Or—to take just one example of everyday arrogance—that American employees used to ride their motorcycles around the center of at least one major city at night, threatening and scattering the locals? Americans (and the British too) have a tendency to react to the history of their doings in other people's countries like drunks after some spectacularly dreadful scene at a party the night before: *O God, did I really do all that?* And however much we ourselves may try to excuse our embarrassing behavior or put it out of our minds, the resentful hosts do not. We cannot begin to understand Iran—"Iranian anti-Americanism" most of all—

until we understand this, that we are not innocent.

Outside in the warm, pungent, sociable darkness, I left my friend's house behind me. In many ways Tehran has changed not much at all in the past ten years. In the mornings, streets are still clogged with Paykans, the popular car built from kits exported by a British car manufacturer. The Tehran bazaar, the great block of shops and businesses at the center of the city, remains Iran's economic heart: a stock exchange, banking system, and commodities market masquerading as a collection of hucksters' stalls. There was no planning in the Shah's days, and there is none now—the city sprawls.

The men and women in Tehran live in a variety of ways, guided by a variety of values and desires

ıotograph by Alain Keler/Sygma

Tehran is more crowded now with those searching for work, and those left homeless by the war

But the Shah's road-building schemes have been continued, as has his program to afforest the city's edge.

There are differences, however, some of them noticeable at once. The city is more crowded: the population of Tehran has gone from 6 million in 1978 to more than 10 million today, swelled by those searching for work or social-welfare payments; by refugees who lost their homes along the border areas when Iraq invaded in 1980; by Afghans who fled the Soviet invasion of their country. The city has decayed too. Tehran was drab and dirty under the Shah, but it looks worse now—one sees more rusted metal, more dirt, more shops with broken signs, more shops closed up for good. Boom businesses, like everywhere in the world it seems, are in video rentals and fast-foods. During my previous walks and rides around the city, I had seen an old Colonel Sanders's sign changed to one of a smiling Iranian ("Our Fried Chicken") and even a MacAli's. And I had seen too what

Americans used to see each night, the American Embassy. It is well guarded, and the sign says, in approximated English: "Center of Publication for U.S. Espionage Den of Documents."

My way now took me close to a barracks that belonged to the Revolutionary Guards, the *pasdaran*, and there was a roadblock at the end of this street. A couple of bored *pasdars* in yellowish green uniforms sat on upturned boxes, talking and playing with the worry beads that are called *tasbih* in Farsi. I had a *tasbih* of my own in my pocket, and I fiddled nervously with its silver beads as I walked toward the *pasdars*. The Revolutionary Guards, formally established by Ayatollah Khomeini in May 1979, are the eyes and ears, and the avenging hands, of the Islamic regime; they bear the brunt of the fighting in the Gulf war with Iraq (the *pasdaran* form a separate force from the regular army). The *pasdars*, together with their civilian counterparts, the l[o]cal revolutionary committees or *komitehs*, co[n]trol the country and provide the regime wi[th] protection against a possible uprising or milita[ry] coup. The *komitehs* sprang up throughout th[e] country after the revolution. In 1979, the[re] were 1,500 such committees in Tehran alon[e]. The *komitehs* serve both as local security forc[es] and as the agents of revolutionary authoritie[s]: they might guard buildings, confiscate propert[y] or hustle someone off to prison. The commi[t]tees still exist in every place of work and in e[v]ery section of the town or city, checking on th[e] way people behave.

But nowadays the *komitehs* and the *pasdara* have done their work so effectively that ther[e] are no perceptible challenges to the authorit[y] of the regime, and they don't appear to be in[-]terested in the movements of wandering for[-]eigners. The two *pasdars* at their roadbloc[k] took no notice of me, beyond waving me past[.] I said my thank-yous, and one of them place[d] his hand politely over hi[s] heart by way of reply.

Out in the main part o[f] the street, despite the lat[e] hour, half-a-dozen boy[s] and girls, eight-year old[s] by my reckoning, were playing soccer with a tin can. A beefy girl stormed past and scored a goal, and the others, their attention momentarily relaxed, stared at me as I walked past. The *pasdars* might not have been interested in me, but the fact is that Westerners are almost as rare as an unveiled woman in Iran today; there are probably fewer than two hundred Westerners in the entire country, leaving aside the European or American wives of Iranian citizens. The children may have been seeing a first.

The noise of the soccer game faded behind me as I turned right into a narrow side street, and started climbing the slow gradient northwards. I was emulating the movement of the city itself, which began in the plain and had shifted gradually during the course of the twentieth century toward the north, into the foothills of the magnificent Elburz Mountains that separate Tehran from the Caspian Sea. Or rather, I was emulating the movement of the well-to-do, since the city itself has spread across the plain in less attractive directions too. Only the rich have been able to head up toward the cool,

Photograph by Michael Coyne/Black Star

en hill villages; and North Tehran has be-
ne a continuous string of pleasant suburbs,
ked by noisy roads to the city proper.

The streetlights were on, but they were few in
nber and faint. I leaped across an open
ch—one of the *jubs* characteristic of Tehran.
e *jubs* bring water from the mountain streams
vn into the center of the city; they provide
rything from drinking water to ready trash
is. As I leaped, I immediately cursed myself
my carelessness. The paving stones were
ken and uneven, and in the semi-darkness I
ld have broken my ankle if I had landed
lly.

That was, however, the only danger to which
posed myself by walking through the Tehran
eets that night. Tehran is not Beirut, a wild,
less, Hobbesian nightmare of a place, where
re is continual fear and danger of violent
th, and where gangs of kidnappers roam the
eets. And although we are sometimes in-
ned to imagine that Iran, too, is a wild lawless
ce because of the things its leaders say in
ir country (and its exiles say in ours), it is in
t a strictly ordered society. This was so under
Shah, while he had authority, and the far
ater control exerted by the *komitehs* since the
olution has ensured that violent street crime
rare.

Iran's system of justice is, of course, one of
things we feel we know most about in Iran:
whipping, the cutting off of hands and feet,
stoning to death. There is no question but
t political repression in Iran was fierce in the
ly 1980s. Faced with separatist movements in
rious parts of the country, and with an armed
surrection by the left-wing People's Mojahe-
n movement in which dozens of leading cler-
and hundreds of government officials—
cluding the country's president, secretary gen-
l, and four cabinet ministers—were assassi-
ted, the regime instituted its own campaign
terror: arbitrary arrests; beatings and torture;
mmary trials; public hangings and firing
uads. Harsh punishment for those who oppose
e regime continues, though not on the pre-
ous scale. In 1986, Amnesty International re-
rded 115 executions (though it believes this
ure to be well below the true total).

Facts about harsh punishments meted out by
nian courts for non-political offenses are
ore difficult to obtain. Supporters of the re-
me are inclined to play down the extent of
ch punishments. An ayatollah who was also a
dge—the judiciary has been almost complete-
taken over by the clerics, and Islamic penal
des have been written into the statute
oks—told me that there were so many condi-
ons that had to be fulfilled before a thief's
nd could be severed that in practice it was al-
most impossible to impose amputation as a punishment; the same applied to execution by stoning. And yet the Iranian newspapers have reported a couple of dozen cases of amputation and a number of executions by stoning since the revolution in 1979—perhaps ordered by judges who were less particular than the ayatollah I spoke with. Drug peddling has been the crime most likely to result in grisly sentences. (Drug use, a problem under the Shah, continues to be a problem, particularly now that the drug of choice is no longer opium but heroin.)

Whipping is a more routine punishment. Someone who had been whipped for possessing alcohol told me that in Iran it is as commonplace as the fine for a driving offense is in the West. You are taken to court, and if found guilty are escorted to the courthouse basement where two rather bored men tie you onto a low table and proceed to carry out the sentence—in the case of the man I spoke to, twenty-five painful lashes with a cane, which started at the neck and traveled progressively down to the ankles, before moving upwards to the neck again. Such punishments—amputations, stonings, whippings—are difficult to accept or justify. But it should be said that they are carried out not only in Iran but in such "moderate" states as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Harsh punishment for those who oppose the regime continues, though not on the previous scale

As I toiled up the hill, my earlier enthusiasm fading into mere determination, many of the walls I passed were smothered with posters of men's faces: smiling faces, serious faces, blurred faces, dead faces. These are the last offerings of parents and friends to the memory of those who had died in the war with Iraq, a war now more than seven years old. Respectful death notices, recalling little more than age, regiment, place of death, and the certainty of religious reward:

> The parents of Ali Tabrizi of the 521st infantry regiment announce the martyrdom of their son on the southern war front in the *Val-Fajr-8* offensive. His death, at the age of 28, was for God and the cause of religion.

Perhaps 300,000 like him have died, the victims of amateur tactics and of the knowledge that Iran's advantage lies in its overwhelming, squanderable manpower. (Iran's population of more than 46 million people is three times that of Iraq.) Aerial bombings of Tehran and other cities have also taken lives. There are economic costs as well: by 1984, the war and war-related activities were estimated to be absorbing one-third of the budget, or $10 billion a year. Oil refineries have been bombed and revenues have fallen. Gasoline, fuel, and staple foods are ra-

The Ayatollah takes little part in the day-to-day business of the government or the conduct of the war

tioned, and in Tehran, one now sees people queuing, ration books in hand, for rice, meat, and butter.

Yet aside from the queues and the posters—and the occasional sandbagged emplacement—there are few signs in the streets of Tehran that Iran is fighting one of the bloodiest wars in history. The working class, which strongly supported the Islamic Revolution, supports the war still, if with less zeal. The bulk of those doing the fighting continue to be volunteers, though a haphazard draft system is in place. There is opposition to the war, some of it coming from within the regime, but it is neither loud nor effectively organized. Perhaps the strongest signs of opposition to the war are to be read in the faces of the middle-class people of Tehran. Their living standards have declined dramatically. They are most affected by the shortages the war has brought about. They are war weary.

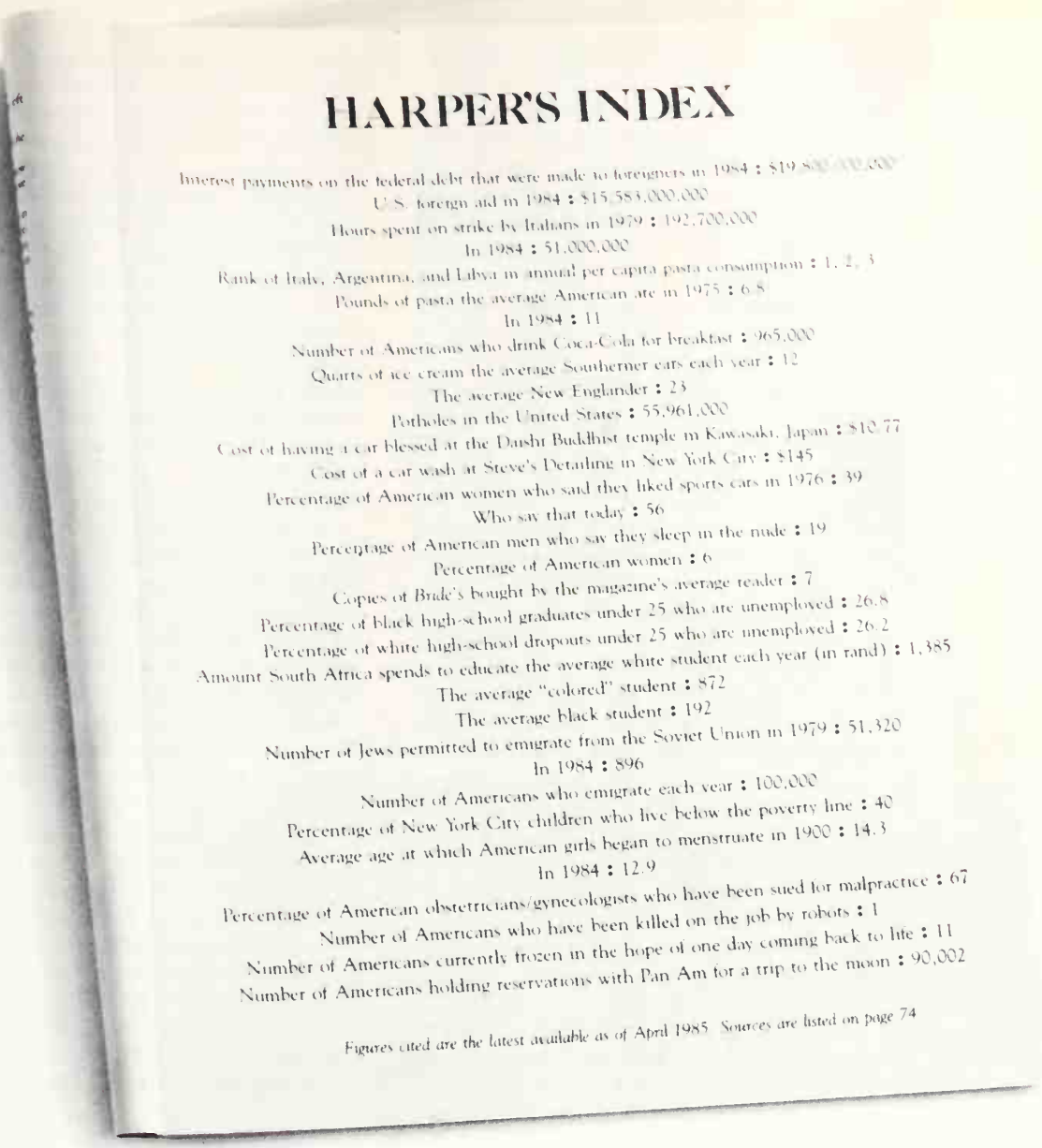
A motor scooter passed me, with a man and two young women on it, their black *chadors* flapping in the wind. Scooters and motorbikes rarely seem to carry fewer than two or three people in Iran, but they have been given a faint protection in the difficult circumstances of the Tehran traffic: if you hit one with your car, it is automatically your fault. After the scooter had passed, the gurgling of the water in the *jub* was the only audible noise, apart from my own footfalls and the faint layer of sound that any city gives out at nighttime.

I passed the sandbagged entrance to a government building, and sized-up an attractive printed banner with the stern face of Ayatollah Khomeini, which hung outside. It occurred to me to take it, part of the spoils of my trip: but I changed my mind as the night watchman inside glanced up, alerted by the sound of my step on the uneven pavement. He was an elderly man with a beard: he could have been Khomeini's distant relative. The banner stayed where it was.

I looked ahead, toward the mountains. Somewhere up there, in the village of Jamaran, the head reproduced on the banner lay asleep on a Spartan pillow, surrounded by hundreds of guards and a million dollars' worth of security equipment. The Ayatollah, now eighty-five, is the Islamic Revolution's most valuable possession: its architect, its avatar, its final court of appeal. He takes little part in the day-to-day business of the government or the conduct of the war, but he sees his leading ministers regularly and is prepared, if he disagrees, to condemn their decisions in public. Khomeini's disapproval means political death for an aspiring politician; this may explain why, after seven years of a bloody and exhausting war, no group has surfaced to suggest the possibility of a negotiated end to the fighting. In other fields, where Khomeini does not have strong feelings, as he does about defeating Iraq, the political debate is intense and sometimes rowdy: within the narrow confines of the Islamic agenda there is something akin to democracy among the political leadership of Iran, and its parliament, the *majlis*, broadcasts its proceedings live on television.

"You Westerners," a senior figure in the official hierarchy had said musingly as I sat on the floor of his modest flat in East Tehran and emptied my plate of rice and *zereshk*, the sharp red berries that flavored it. "Why do you always talk about us as having power struggles while you yourselves merely have politics?" Now I thought that perhaps he had a point: we have the impression in the West that numerous obscure clerics are pressing round the aging form of Khomeini, waiting to take over power from him the moment death snatches it away. The reality is more complex. Khomeini's political power is based on his immense personal influence as leader of the revolution. But his constitutional position as supreme authority, or *faqih*—making him the court of last resort on all matters that touch upon Islamic law—derives from the Shi'ite concept of an Islamic jurisprudent who will be in overall charge of affairs until such time as the twelfth Imam returns to earth. When Khomeini dies, his position as supreme jurisprudent will be filled by another Grand Ayatollah or, if no single jurist is universally recognized as Khomeini came to be, by a council of jurists. In 1985, the special Council of Experts designated Ayatollah Hosain-Ali Montazeri as the successor to Khomeini as *faqih*—though some have interpreted the execution of Mehdi Hashemi, the relation of Montazeri's who leaked the news of the mission to Tehran by Oliver North and Robert McFarlane, as a sign that all may not go as smoothly as constitutionally planned.

The chances are that things will not change suddenly when Khomeini dies (and since his elder brother died in his mid-nineties Khomeini may well be with us for some time yet). A new *faqih* will be installed, or a council appointed. Day-to-day power will no doubt continue to be wielded by much the same loose, competing coalition of figures (Speaker of the Parliament Rafsanjani, President Khamene'i, Prime Minister Musavi, and so on) who wield it at present. But what will disappear with his death—and may be a factor down the road—will be his position as the nation's chief referee, the one person whose verdicts, because of his enormous political power, are universally accepted. Without him to keep the various political figures in



HARPER'S INDEX

Interest payments on the federal debt that were made to foreigners in 1984 : $19,800,000,000
U.S. foreign aid in 1984 : $15,583,000,000
Hours spent on strike by Italians in 1979 : 192,700,000
In 1984 : 51,000,000
Rank of Italy, Argentina, and Libya in annual per capita pasta consumption : 1, 2, 3
Pounds of pasta the average American ate in 1975 : 6.8
In 1984 : 11
Number of Americans who drink Coca-Cola for breakfast : 965,000
Quarts of ice cream the average Southerner eats each year : 12
The average New Englander : 23
Potholes in the United States : 55,961,000
Cost of having a car blessed at the Daishi Buddhist temple in Kawasaki, Japan : $10.77
Cost of a car wash at Steve's Detailing in New York City : $145
Percentage of American women who said they liked sports cars in 1976 : 39
Who say that today : 56
Percentage of American men who say they sleep in the nude : 19
Percentage of American women : 6
Copies of *Bride's* bought by the magazine's average reader : 7
Percentage of black high-school graduates under 25 who are unemployed : 26.8
Percentage of white high-school dropouts under 25 who are unemployed : 26.2
Amount South Africa spends to educate the average white student each year (in rand) : 1,385
The average "colored" student : 872
The average black student : 192
Number of Jews permitted to emigrate from the Soviet Union in 1979 : 51,320
In 1984 : 896
Number of Americans who emigrate each year : 100,000
Percentage of New York City children who live below the poverty line : 40
Average age at which American girls began to menstruate in 1900 : 14.3
In 1984 : 12.9
Percentage of American obstetricians/gynecologists who have been sued for malpractice : 67
Number of Americans who have been killed on the job by robots : 1
Number of Americans currently frozen in the hope of one day coming back to life : 11
Number of Americans holding reservations with Pan Am for a trip to the moon : 90,002

Figures cited are the latest available as of April 1985. Sources are listed on page 74

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There is poverty in Iran, though beggars in the street are rare, as are signs of actual malnutrition

check, power struggles may indeed overtake politics in Iran.

Khomeini today is not how Americans remember him from the days of the Shah's overthrow, which is when I first spoke with him. He is white, frail, his compelling voice now little more than a whisper. He has, somehow, an air of transparency, like a ghost in Shakespeare. Yet his words can still reduce a crowd of soldiers to tears, and rouse a group of businessmen to noisy defiance of Iraq and the United States. If he is frail, his power is not.

I passed an unfinished apartment building. In the first years after the revolution, there was little building construction, but now the government is starting to encourage it. Housing, especially for the urban poor, remains the problem it was under the Shah. The poor, who continue to stream to the city, often make do in shantytowns.

The window of a ground-floor flat in the unfinished building was open, and I stopped to peer in. Beneath the light of a bare bulb a couple lay fully clothed on a mattress. The woman was asleep, her black *chador* around her like a sleeping bag. The man rested on his back, his eyes open, staring at the light bulb as it moved slightly in the night air. He switched his gaze to me as I stood there: it was a frank, neutral look, not hostile in any way, but I muttered an apology and moved on. What right had I to intrude in his life, staring into his poverty as a visitor at a zoo might stare into an animal's cage? I heard him say something to the woman, and she groaned sleepily as I moved out of earshot.

There is poverty in Iran, as there was before the revolution, though beggars in the streets are rare, and even among the people living in the shantytowns in South Tehran there are few if any signs of actual malnutrition. The population in Iran is increasing by one of the highest rates in the Middle East, and this is making it worse for the poor. The dramatic oil-price decline that hit in the winter of 1985–86 jolted the economy; annual oil revenues, which reached an estimated $21 billion in 1983, plummeted to $10 billion in 1986. The official unemployment rate is 14 percent even with the buildup of the armed forces. But the regime has placed a moderate emphasis on welfare programs, despite revenue losses and war costs. And there have been stabs at land reform. Moreover, the poor have no doubt benefited psychologically from the fact that there has been a certain leveling throughout society of economic status—and have benefited as well from the fact that Iran's leaders are relatively modest men now.

The real victims of the revolution have been the average-income middle class: the office-workers and teachers and civil servants. Hundreds of thousands, especially those wit technical skills, left Iran after the mullahs cam to power. For those who stayed, a single job often insufficient to provide enough money t cope with the naggingly high inflation. I hav met teachers who are taxi drivers in their spar time, and taxi drivers who double as night po ters, and night porters who are training a teachers. All of them had the distracted look o men who guessed that they would no be able to stay afloat much longer.

A car moved sclerotically up the hill an was suddenly surrounded by the yellow beams o torches: the *basijis* had set up a roadblock t check for stolen cars or signs of drunkenness *Basijis* are army volunteers, often trained fo only a month or so before they are sent off to th war: Iran has some two million such volunteer and 200,000 of them are said to be at the fron at one time. The *basijis* are the kind of men whom Western television news reports like to show on the parade ground beating their breast in unison and chanting *Marg bar Amrika!*—Death to America! It gives them an air, in Western eyes, of manic dedication and malevolence, and it produces a frisson of horror and revulsion in us.

In fact, the *basijis* I've encountered tend to be mild enough fellows. I have never been shouted at or attacked in Iran in the years since the revolution took place. I have scarcely even been criticized there, except by government officials who disliked my reporting—officials of Western governments of course do likewise. Which is to say that there exists in Iran a sophisticated awareness that not every individual can be held responsible for the actions of his government. (I should also say that there are cruel exceptions to this rule: there are two Americans and an Englishman in Iranian jails. John Pattis has been sentenced to ten years' imprisonment for espionage on grounds that were clearly absurd; another American is being held on unspecified charges. Roger Cooper, a British journalist, is also being held as a spy but is likewise clearly innocent.)

"What were you looking for?" I asked a bespectacled *basiji* in my best Farsi. He had just waved the car driver on, and in the light of the torches I could see he had a pleasant face, smiling under his heavy mustache.

"Oh, the usual things," he said.

"You mean booze?"

He laughed. "Everything."

"What happens if you find something?"

"We don't often find anything." He laughed again.

A Jewish carpet dealer, a friend of a friend of mine, was stopped recently, not by the *basijis*

ut by the Revolutionary Guards—a more seri-
us matter. It was on the main freeway out of
ehran to the west, and when they searched his
ar they found a bottle of homemade vodka un-
er the front seat.

What's this? they asked, starting to get nasty.
he small Jewish population of Iran (20,000–
0,000), like the rather large Armenian one,
as to be careful: the Revolutionary Guards
on't like Jews or Armenians much. But I have
either seen nor heard of any routine persecu-
on of these minorities as there has been of the
aha'is, decent and devout people who regard
eir faith as an improvement on Islam, a dan-
erous belief in Iran.

"I'm glad you asked me that," the carpet deal-
r said, thinking fast. "It's a bottle of vodka.
nopened, you notice."

The point was an important one; possession
f an unopened bottle of alcohol could incur a
enalty of twenty-five lashes from the courts,
hereas indications that he had been drinking
om the bottle would lead to a much heavier
unishment: seventy-five lashes, at least.

And what do you think you're doing, carrying
bottle of vodka around with you?

"My friends," said the
an, his years of carpet
ealing standing him in
od stead, "I'll be frank
ith you. I am not, as you
ay have realized, a Mus-
m. As a Jew, it is not
gainst the law for me to
ink alcohol. I bought
is bottle of vodka—not
mething I often do, you
nderstand—in order to
e able to drink to the con-
nuing health and lasting
ccess of the great Imam
homeini."

On your way, said one of
e guards. They even hand-
d him back the bottle.

The manufacture of
dka is one of the great
nderground achievements
modern Iran. It is not, as
e carpet dealer pointed
ut, an offense for the
on-Muslims to drink al-
hol, or even to make it
r their own consump-
on: it is simply an offense
make it for other peo-
e. But crime or not, the
oduction and marketing
alcohol remains an in-
stry in Iran, and an effi-
cient one: the price of a liter of vodka, made from the best raisins, remains today what it was in 1979—a thousand rials, the equivalent of ten dollars in purchasing power. The ordering is done in coded terms, and the required number of containers will be delivered to your door. Poured out in generous proportions and mixed with orange juice, a veritable Persian screwdriver, it has a memorable, slightly nutty taste.

The small (20,000–30,000) Jewish population has to be careful: the Revolutionary Guards don't like Jews much

Ahead of me, a couple wandered out of a small darkened *kucheh* or alley, holding hands. As they reached the better-lit street they relinquished their hold on one another and walked demurely up the hill, side by side. They seemed moderately well-to-do, and the girl wore jeans and high heels under her *chador*. A little farther on, they crossed the road and walked toward the entrance to a restaurant. A couple of Mercedes were parked outside, and there was a general sense of discreet money.

The rich in Iran are not as rich as they once were, but times are not exactly hard for them. The shops in the expensive parts of North Tehran still display gold Rolexes and Piagets set

otograph by S. Franklin/Sygma

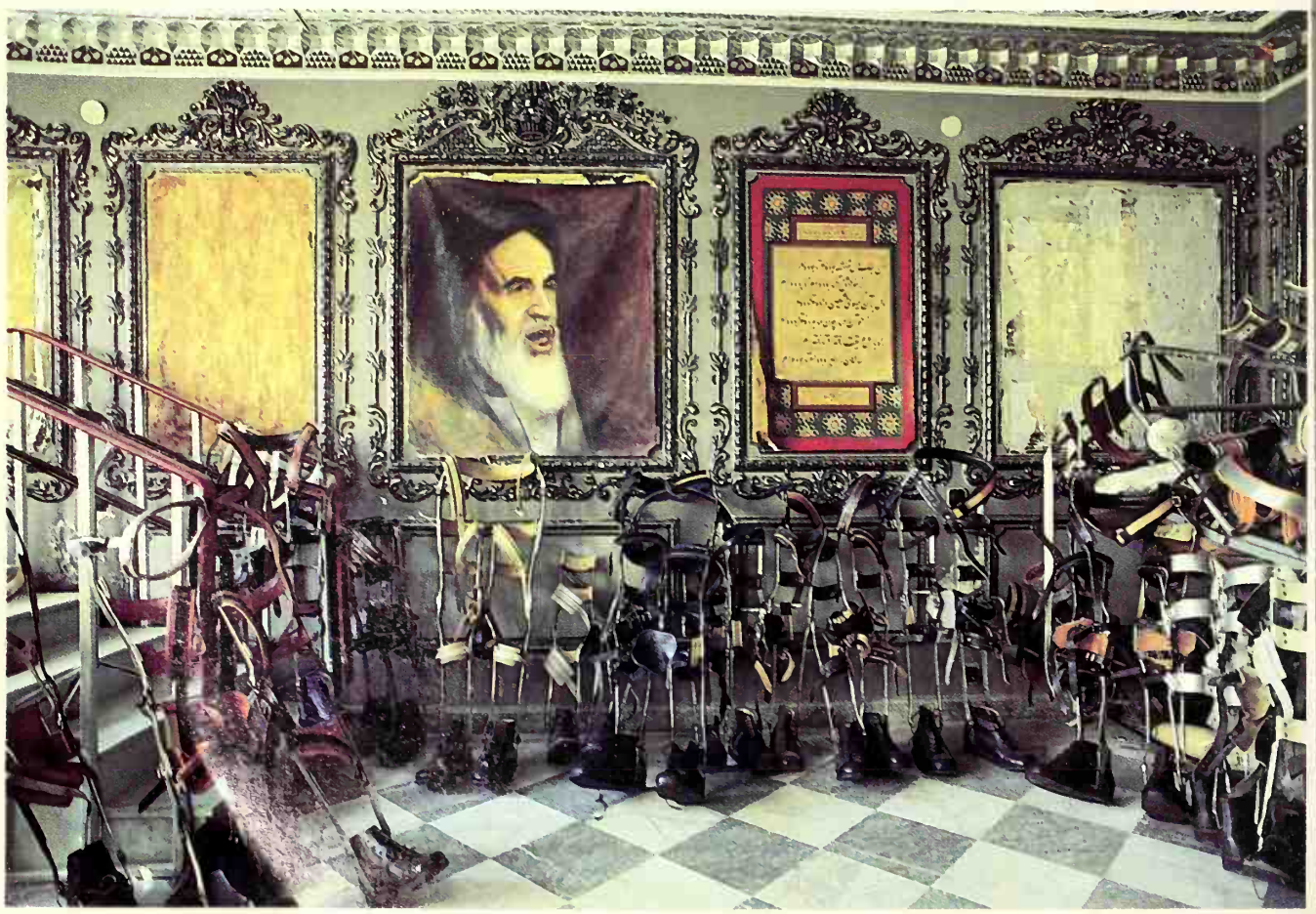
The main concern of the rich appears to be to stay out of the army

with diamonds, and the after-shaves and perfumes carry the best European names. The common complaint is less about money than about the boredom of life under the Islamic Republic. "This isn't living, it's just existing"—so many people said that to me when I visited North Tehran that it seemed they must have read it somewhere. Such people often make the best company for a Westerner in Iran. But when there is real hardship and real sacrifice in the air it is hard to sympathize with people whose main concern appears to be to stay out of the army and to get their hands on the latest expensive cars.

As I watched the couple enter the restaurant, I saw that the young man stood politely aside, allowing the girl to go in ahead of him, Western fashion. I saw, too, her partially covered head turn in the light of the doorway, and a suggestion of rouge on the lips that smiled at him.

Women are expected to cover their hair and the contours of their body with either a *chador*, a *maghne'eh* (a hooded garment), or a scarf and a cloak, and this—the oppression that Westerners believe it symbolizes—has led to strong criticism abroad of the Iranian attitude toward women. But the role of women in Iran is quite complex. Women have always played an important part in Persian life; and after the revolution, as before it, they own property, run businesses, and hold positions in the civil service. In Tehran it is not unusual to see a woman driving a car—women have been dragged from their cars and beaten for this in Saudi Arabia. And although on previous visits I have seen women wearing a bit of eye makeup approached on the street and lectured by members of a *komiteh*, I noticed on my last visit that things had become more lax, at least for now. A few women wore makeup in the streets, and in many cases the *chadors* were shorter and less than all-embracing.

I had reached the crossroads at the foot of Val-ye-Asr Avenue; when I first visited Tehran, it was Pahlavi Avenue, and led northwards to the Shah's magnificent palaces in the foothills of the Elburz. In the daytime, with the police on duty, crossing the vast extent of the Val-ye-Asr circle is bad enough; but at night, with cars swerving fast around the curve of the circle, it can be terrifying. Now, however, the old imperialist came out in me as I marched across the roadway, determined to look neither to the left nor right. Twice large Mercedes charged by within a few feet, but Iranians are skilled at



Photograph by Michael Coyne/Black Star

ssing one another on the road and quite often so. I reached the other side, fifty yards away, scathed.

Here, a large wooden hoarding hid one of the ilding sites for the Tehran Metro—a curious of faith for a country at war and desperately ort of foreign currency. The plans for the etro began under the Shah with the assistance the French, but it was dogged by incompeace and corruption and lapsed before the revution. Construction got underway again in tober 1986, much against the better judgnt of a number of figures in the religious hierhy, who doubted that the capital investment uld—as supporters of the Metro claimed—unemployment and lead eventually to a reneration of Iranian industry. (Economic iss of all kinds have been among the most ntentiously debated in Iran: in the bazaar, newspapers, the *majlis*, everywhere.) This ne the Japanese were there to give advice and hnical assistance, and the plans were far re elaborate than before: one line, twelve les long, from north to south of the city, and econd, even longer, from east to west. Not ny weeks before my recent visit, Speaker of e Parliament Rafsanjani had examined the rk for himself. A pragmatic, rather raffish figsecond in political influence only to Khoini, Rafsanjani told those on hand: "A lot of ople have said we were wrong to build this etro. Well, who knows? But just think what a at air-raid shelter it will make, when the Iracome over."

I continued walking and passed a little park side a hospital. On a seat among a group of shes two patients in pajamas—God knows y they were out so late—were talking earstly, too immersed in their argument to look at me. The bushes had a tart, clean smell to em, as though they had been planted by rses. The two men were talking about the r, arguing and reminiscing by turns. One of em, he was perhaps twenty-two, had rested crutches against the back of the bench. The l of his blue-striped pajama trousers stirred slightly in the night breeze: his leg had been amputated above the knee.

I was close to my hotel now, and could see e massive T it formed on the ridge above me, I toiled up the broken pavement of what had en Los Angeles Road and was now Hejab ("Isnic Dress") Avenue. I saw the light shining m the window of my room, one of the few hts still on in the hotel, and turned into the urtyard.

A dark figure detached itself from the shadow a pillar, where other dark figures were gathed, and walked across to me. Recognizing him, I put my arm around his shoulder: "Reza, how are you?"

"Is it quite good, Simpson," he said.

Reza was my driver; he was timid by nature, and inclined to complain if we went filming illicitly, without an official government "minder" from the Orwellian-sounding Ministry of Islamic Guidance. He spoke English, but habitually transposed the words "is" and "it," thereby creating spurious questions out of statements he made; and he had never quite been able to work out what my first name was, so that in an effort to be free and easy with me he called me by my surname, which gave an imperious touch to everything he said: "Look there, Simpson," or "Simpson, open the door."

"Time to go home now, Reza," I said, feeling guilty about having kept him waiting so long (though he was paid by the hour, and seemed to relish the work at this time of few visitors).

"Is it no problem, Simpson," he replied, grandly.

Up in my familiar room, which sentiment suggested was the one in which I had stayed during the months that led up to the revolution, I looked out at the view to the south of Tehran, toward the great plain that opens up there and leads eventually to the desert, to Qom, and to Isfahan, one of the loveliest cities on earth. A thousand miles beyond that, U.S. navy ships were plowing grimly through the waters of the Gulf, protecting the sea lanes at tremendous cost and, perhaps, looking for an opportunity to wreak vengeance on Iran for all the attacks and indignities it has inflicted on Americans in recent years. It is hard to avoid seeing in all this the anger of a great power against a smaller one that refuses to behave itself as a good client state should: the response, in effect, of the colonialist.

The old center of Tehran was spread out below me in the darkness, the few lights of its buildings and streets blurring in the dirty night air. I could never look at this view, either at the time of the Shah's last days or now, without experiencing the feeling that something would crack this quiet. Iran has settled down, and its religious fervor has moderated since the early 1980s; but the system is still too extreme for it to last in quite its present form. It must change. But Iran will change only if it changes itself. The Islamic Republic does not—as the West so often assumes complacently—face collapse. Far from it; it has weathered a seven-year war, the drop in oil prices, the hostility of the West. The country is well administered, and intelligently—if often cynically—governed. Post-colonial Iran is a strong and effective power; sooner or later, the United States will have to come to terms with it. ■

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HOLDING IT TOGE

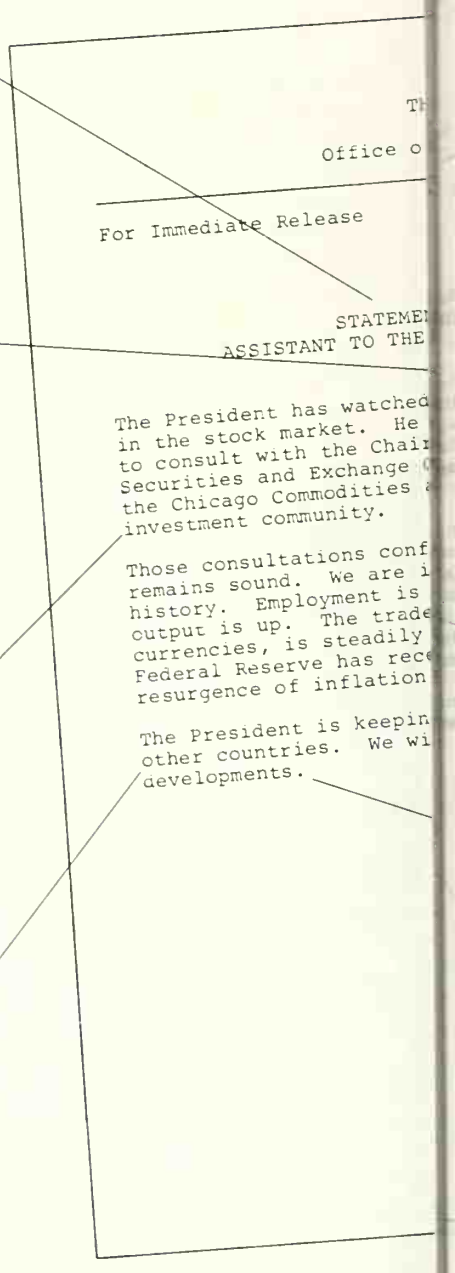
A guide to the ne

Not a "statement" but a prayer: Let this be not a crash. But if it must be so, give us the strength to bluff until Election Day '88 . . .

Concern? In view of the fact that the stock market was in the process of obliterating half a trillion dollars in paper values, the word the President may have been searching for is "alarm." But not "surprise": predicting that the market was about to go flooey was roughly as difficult as predicting that if you go to the corner of Wall and Broad, you will find a stock exchange. And while we're on the subject of predictions, here's another: the White House will no longer be simply *watching*. There is a legacy to protect, which is a nice way of saying there is the next election to win. Expect no cures, but plenty of Band-Aids.

The "leaders of the investment community" were not consulting but pleading and whining and begging on bended knee, as men are wont to do when their fortunes go poof. Their voices were heard, and will continue to be: the brokers, and the big investors sharing the tub with them, remain vital constituents of the party in power. And a good thing this may be, odd as it sounds. For what happened on Black Monday? The brokers arrived at work as the apostles of free enterprise and markets unrestrained by the dead hand of government regulators. Four hours later, they were crying for federal investigation, federal monetary adjustments, federal policy changes, federal "leadership"—crying, that is, for FDR and his New Deal.

"Other countries" such as Germany and Japan will be bullied to stimulate their economies—in the interest of absorbing our goods and services—but stroked in private ("Of course we won't let the dollar fall *that* low . . ."). It's important that they continue to purchase quantities of wallpaper in the form of U.S. Treasury notes, or word will leak out that we are broke.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For Immediate Release

STATEME
ASSISTANT TO THE

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Those consultations conf
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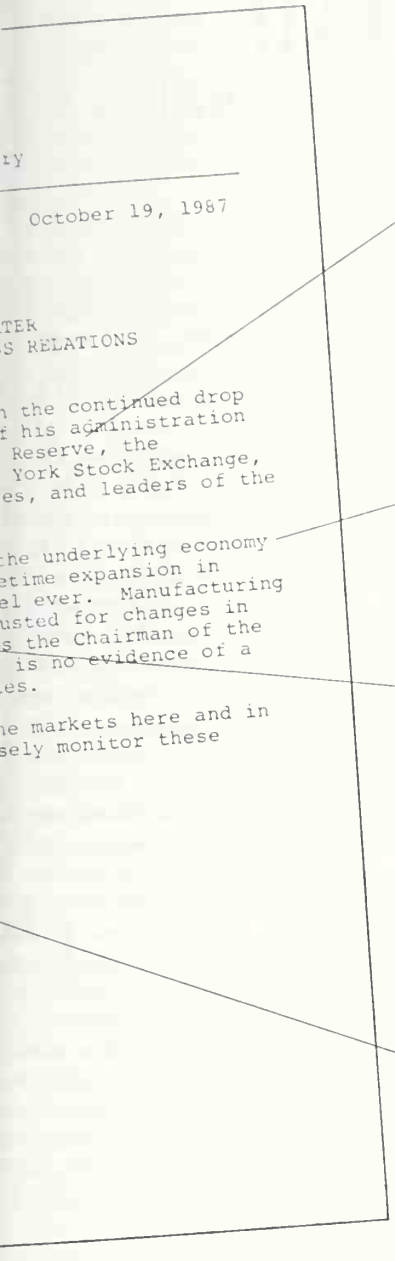
L. J. Davis wrote "The Next Panic," which appeared in the May 1987 issue of Harper's Magazine.

UNTIL NOVEMBER

nics, *by L. J. Davis*



Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve, occupies a prominent place in the administration's pocket—unlike his predecessor, Paul Volcker. The White House consultation with him has gone like this: "Good morning Alan, pump more money in." Easing the money supply will forestall a recession. Inflation will rise, but slowly. It may be harmful down the road, but probably not before November.

The underlying economy is a swamp of debt. The huge budget deficit will be talked about and talked about and then passed along to the next administration. The Reaganauts may agree to some new taxes, but not much, and certainly not in ways that will harm their wealthy constituents. This month, in accordance with the tax-reform plan, the richest citizens and corporations will get a healthy tax cut, at a cost to the Treasury of $17 billion.

Easing the spectacular trade deficit falls to Treasury Secretary James Baker, who has already allowed the dollar to drift lower and lower—another inflationary act. But *carefully,* mind you, ever on the lookout for the first sign that foreigners are packing it in and taking their money home.

By the end of this astonishing White House statement—issued after a *crash,* lest you forget—you may think, somewhat queasily, that you have heard it all before. You have: it's pure Herbert Hoover. From the President himself, expect more paraphrasing of Hoover, even a direct quote or two, though do not expect him to acknowledge his source, or for that matter to have any direct knowledge of it. Ronald Reagan continues to believe that raising defense spending and cutting taxes and encouraging anyone with a credit card to spend himself into deep debt is the formula for "peacetime expansion." It is possible that he will be comfortably ensconced at his ranch, hacking away at his limitless supply of underbrush, before it's morning in America, and we all have to smell the coffee. After the '29 crash, it was two years before the country and the world realized the extent of its predicament. In two years, both Reagan and the 1988 presidential election will be history.

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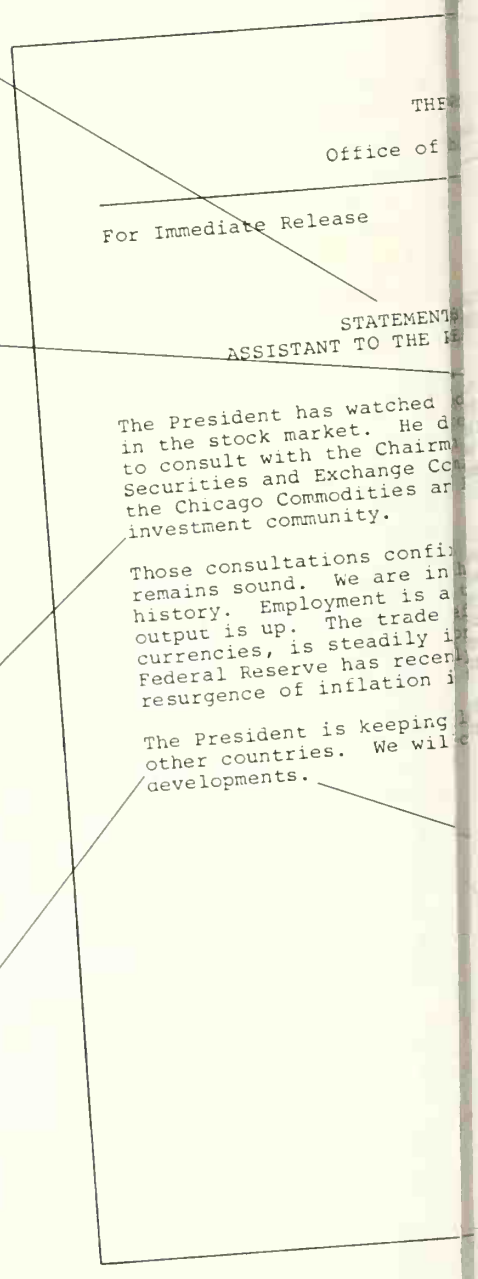
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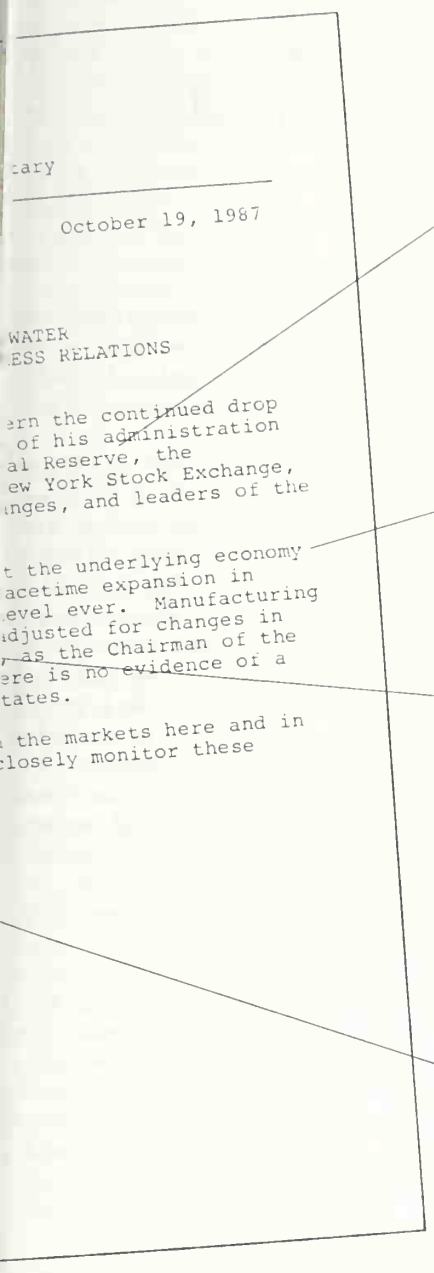

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THE CULTURAL CONTRADICTIONS OF THE G.O.P.

God and mammon on the campaign trail

By Philip Weiss

The first sign of a higher authority as I climbed the hill toward the Grand Hotel Friday evening was the man in a colonial costume at the end of the private road shoveling manure. Mackinac Island, situated in Lake Huron between Michigan's Upper and Lower peninsulas, bans motorized traffic, and that leaves horses, and the horses leave... sweepers, shovelers, scraper-uppers, hosers, flushers, draymen, a little manure industry. Down in the village, guys in denim worked the streets, but the Grand's shoveler wore a pith helmet and a bleachy white coverall with "Grand Hotel" in bright green letters across the back. He was the only one on the steep street who escaped the dress code, which was spelled out in gilt letters on a nearby wooden sign: GENTLEMEN AFTER 6 P.M. MUST BE ATTIRED IN COAT AND TIE. His shovel rasped on the asphalt.

On the way up, I met a young Republican who said we were approaching the longest porch in the world and the cleanest air and, sure enough, just inside the Grand were plaques that made those claims.

It was 6:30, on the eve of a Republican conference weekend last fall in the tumult of the presidential campaign, and the hotel lobby had been taken over by forces loyal to George Bush, solid men with a Main Street sheen and no trouble with the dress code. They jingled past the trays of smoked whitefish and ballooned past the stripy decor. Fat pink stripes, fat green stripes, fat baby blue stripes—the Grand had a thing for fat stripes but a policy against women in pants. AFTER SIX IN THE EVENING, LADIES ARE DRESSED IN THEIR LOVELIEST FOR ENJOYMENT OF THE MANY SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, said the sign. A woman in an evening dress paused in the lobby to snag up her zipper, elbow jutting, and it felt like a very long time ago.

In presidential politics in Michigan, George Bush had been out-organized by Pat Robertson, and I looked around for Robertson's people. His command post was said to be in the Card Room on the first floor, but that proved hard to find. I couldn't be sure of the floors; I kept bumping into funny round couches in the lobby with velvet phallus-like backrests, kept passing paintings of foxes—*The Death; Full Cry*. Finally I opened a door on a room with a bust of Lincoln and a stack of boxes marked AFR. Americans For Robertson, the command post. No one was there, but this didn't mean the island was not going to be swarmed; the Robertsonites had exhibited a keen instinct for surprise attack.

The boxes were heavy with brochures. First Robertson was pictured with a forest of microphones before him, then being nuzzled by two horses (he took a $56,000 tax write-off last year for a horse-breeding business). In the space of a few paragraphs the brochure used the word *vision* nine times, but mentioned none of the stuff that gave the Baptist minister (he would resign his ministry two weeks later) such high negatives in the polls: the faith healing, the tax incentives for people to have more children, the personal instructions from God.

The other boxes had party fixings—mints, a few bottles of Vernors ginger ale, a case of Hawaiian Punch. Fundamentalist Christians are not supposed to drink.

As I came out of the room, Colleen Engler, a former state representative supporting Kansas

Philip Weiss is a New York writer. His last article for Harper's, *"Forbidden Pleasures," was cited as one of the notable essays of 1986 in* Best American Essays.

Senator Robert Dole, who had not mounted much of a campaign in Michigan, passed and gave me a quizzical look.

"Nobody home," I said.

"Must be vespers," she said with a hint of savagery.

Republican loyalists in Michigan have come to Mackinac (pronounced Mack-in-aw) in odd years since 1955 to talk over issues but mostly to club and retreat. The small island had captured the Republican imagination after a national party meeting twelve years before. Party leaders had grouped at the Grand Hotel in 1943 to hammer out a war plank in their platform, the internationalists and isolationists being made to agree, and ever since the hotel, a wedding cake of pine and white paint, has been a mythic seat of party unity.

I'd come for the seventeenth Republican leadership conference, but this year unity wasn't on the agenda. Michigan will be the first state to choose its delegates to the Republican National Convention in New Orleans next August, and presidential politics here had turned extremely bitter. Last February a coalition loyal to Robertson and New York Representative Jack Kemp had unexpectedly seized control of the party and thrown many of the vice-president's followers out of party positions.

The Republicans were striving to keep the festive weekend unsullied by politics. Just three days before, I'd been in a crowded hall in Lansing when the Republicans had tried to settle a highly divisive matter in advance of Mackinac, a rules question involving who could serve as delegates to the state's district and county conventions that, in turn, will help choose the state's seventy-seven delegates to the national convention. When the Robertson-Kemp coalition won the rules fight handily—the state central committee voted 60 to 41 to exclude 1,200 prospective delegates thought to be loyal to Bush—it was more than a severe embarrassment to the vice president, who had won Michigan by 2 to 1 in 1980. It increased the odds that Robertson will deal the vice president a dramatic blow when the state delegates are chosen on January 30, eight days before the Iowa caucus and two weeks before the New Hampshire primary. Robertson will very likely come in first. Kemp could finish close enough to Bush to lift his sagging candidacy.

The Lansing meeting had been raucous, profane; it hadn't settled things. Brother had opposed brother: tall, angular Saul Anuzis, though a Kemp supporter, had voted with the party regulars and Bush backers while his rakish younger brother Andy, also a Kemp supporter, had gone over to the Robertson side. Some Bush people vowed never to let Andy forget it. "Oh Jean!" a state representative I'd stood next to had whispered in shock when she heard an old friend, Jean Fox, cast her vote with the Robertsonites. It was as if Fox had gone into a cult, and indeed the clump of tweedy, tanned, salt-and-pepper-haired Bush people who held a press conference immediately after that meeting to announce their plans to sue the party over the question had the stunned, aggrieved look of parents who've failed to reason with their cult-bound kids. In the end, the Lansing meeting had only served to get people's blood up for Mackinac, when Robertson, Kemp, and Dole were due to put in appearances.

The division here went beyond Michigan to the party nationwide; it was mirrored in the White House, where pragmatists such as Howard Baker pulled Reagan one way and hard right types such as Edwin Meese III pulled the other. There was an ideological element to the struggle, but from afar such differences were nearly imperceptible. Michigan's presidential campaigners all called themselves conservatives; none dared differ over such right-wing orthodoxies as supporting the *contras*, funding Star Wars, stopping abortion, elevating Robert Bork, and all the rest.

The deeper schism seemed cultural, and it threatened not just the mythic peace on Mackinac but Ronald Reagan's majority. The coalition the President had forged to win two landslide victories was in danger of fragmenting as Pat Robertson summoned one group of conservatives and George Bush beckoned to another. MICHIGAN FIRST, said the prophetic sweatshirts worn by the righteous Robertsonites—their battle with the well-fed, secular pragmatic wing of the party was nowhere more dramatic than in this big watery state. I had made a couple of visits to Michigan last summer and fall to see that clash up close.

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The vice president and Mrs. Bush had slipped two handsomely printed invitations into my conference packet—to "A Bush Bash" that night at the Village Inn and "An Afterglow of 'Hummers,' " whatever hummers were, on Saturday at 9 P.M.—and after supper I headed into town for the bash.

But on the way down I ran into Mary Giordano, who invited me to go with her and a few other Robertson supporters to a restaurant called the French Outpost. I could go to the bash later.

Mary had on sort of a leopardish dress and heels. She is twenty-two and attractive, with abundant curling hair and a lot of gold jewelry. Mary works as a bookkeeper in a restaurant.

'And God said to me, "You see the shape of Michigan, that's my handprint." Devil, you've run this state long enough. Now let go'

When I met her a month before in Detroit, she told me the story of how she got into politics. In 1985 at her church, a Pentecostal congregation north of Detroit, a young woman with a wholesome face announced from the pulpit that it was time Christians sought to make their beliefs affect the real world. The woman spoke on behalf of the Freedom Council, a group operating with Pat Robertson's blessing that was recruiting candidates for precinct delegate. Precinct delegate is the bottom tier in the state's complex presidential delegate-selection process: representatives of neighborhood-sized districts who will choose the people who will choose the people who go to the '88 convention. In May 1986, when Mary filed her candidacy, she was also helping Robertson to launch his biggest surprise attack. A decorous process that usually elicited three or four thousand candidates had been mobbed by over ten thousand.

On August 5, 1986, Mary won, 31 to 28; statewide, though the numbers have been disputed, Robertson emerged with a plurality of the precinct delegates, Kemp a handful. Bush's battle for Michigan was probably already lost. In February 1987, the Robertson and Kemp people ganged up to take over the party's state central committee, and it was that majority that decided the rules question in Lansing. Today Mary had power: she was one of the youngest members of the state central committee.

At the French Outpost the Robertson people had a few tables moved together and were eating pizza. Sitting a couple of seats apart was Robertson's Michigan braintrust: Lorinda Packer, the fresh-faced woman who had come to Mary's church two years back, and David Walters, an organizer with a broad clear face, a neat mustache, and a slightly prim Southern accent. I'd been to his office in Lansing. On the wall was a photograph of the globe from space with the caption, "Thy Will Be Done . . . on Earth." Walters had said that when friends told him Robertson was too far right he would say that the Washington establishment was so entrenched, you had to vote for "someone almost too conservative" to move policy just a little bit, because "no one bozo in government can ruin our nation or everything we're about."

I wasn't sure what to drink because of the fundamentalist proscriptions, but when I asked if it was OK to get a beer, Lori Packer laughed and Mary said it was fine. I started talking to the woman on my right, who told me about the thesis she did at Robertson's CBN University. It argued that 13 Romans compelled Christians to challenge Caesar's evils. This was a Robertson theme, fundamentalist opinion having shifted in the last few years from the view that politics was too down and dirty for Christians.

Mary's parents had described this change the night after the Lansing vote when I'd dropped by their house outside Detroit. A game show played on the big TV in the living room while Sam Giordano, a chef, recalled a pastor saying that it took just one person—Madalyn Murray O'Hair—to get prayer out of the schools and all the fundamentalists hadn't lifted a finger. But now here was his daughter, coming forward to be "the feet" of the party, to help "restore righteousness" to American politics.

I'd asked Mary what that meant. "We have gotten so far away from Judeo-Christian values. Letting people do what they want; saying, 'If it feels good, do it'; situational ethics. We need to have God involved in our government. The reason the Robertson organization is so successful is because each person has a desire in his own heart to really see the righteousness come about. That's what the other camps have lacked."

Political professionals looked on the Robertson forces with envy, the way they massed out from churches to work and did all they were told without questioning or backbiting, without having more important things to do the night of a meeting. The potential was enormous: there were perhaps 20 million born-again Christian voters.

"They are not going to sit back," Mary said, "because they have a higher calling. They feel, I'm not doing this for me, I'm doing this because it's God's will." Robertson himself had said that God had called on him to run for the presidency. When Mary had taken me to her church that night, a dark-haired woman with a fixed stare had stood at the altar and described her conversations with God about politics.

"And God said to me, 'You see the shape of Michigan, that's my handprint, I made Michigan in the shape of my hand,'" she said. "These are the last days, we are in the latter times. Devil, you've run this state long enough. *Now let go.*

"God says, 'I'm going to blow the doors off.' "

Afterwards Mary and I had gone to dinner. She'd sipped a vodka tonic (pointing out to me that the Bible makes references to people drinking wine) and spoken of the campaign's relation to God. "To continually see victory and unity and organization in spite of opposition—I just don't believe that it can only be man's doing," she said. "Here is this new influx, this fresh crowd of forty or fifty [state central-committee members], who've been struck by a lightning bolt and they're handling it very well. I just know in my heart that God has really had his hand in all of this from years back."

On one of my days in Lansing, I'd driven to the Saline First Assembly of God to see a fundamentalist service. From the start it was filled

with joy, as the saved celebrated their imminent meeting with the King. Everyone stood and sang songs, the men on the stage swayed and sang and closed their eyes and lifted their arms in the air. Women in the pews hit tambourines, the girls in front of me chewed gum, there was faith healing for the boy born without an esophagus. A woman testified about the need to free those behind "the bamboo and iron curtains," and then a man with a mustache in the back began to chant in tongues, which sounded like scat singing in Hebrew:

Yobbety-yob-id-dee-shareeny-oke,
yobbity-yob, shikarmy opis.

The pastor, David Thompson, a Robertsonite, is chairman of the Republican party in the fifteenth congressional district. He's a fleshy forty-five-year-old man with an almost dull expression, but at the pulpit he was animated, passionate, and political. He spoke of the rapture, the moment when the saved will be taken up into heaven from this world consumed with lust and lechery.

That didn't mean you turned your back on the world. No, you worked to improve government until the time when we "cast our crowns at his feet." Indeed, the Second Coming was being foretold by earthly events: the birth of the state of Israel was a sign that it would occur in our generation. "First 1948 and now 1988—watch for the signs," Thompson said, and from the joy in his voice, I understood his confidence about a prediction he made quite earnestly but never persuasively: that Pat Robertson could win. For it was a religious belief, not a political one.

Then Thompson spoke of what it would be like for the saved to go to heaven for seven years of celebration. His congregation hushed. In the time of the tribulation, the saved would be lifted up like iron fragments to a giant magnet.

"Folks!" Thompson said, breaking the tension in a hoarse boyish cry of delight, a sweeping gesture of his arm. "We're going to fly."

"These two guys get to heaven, all right? And St. Peter says, we have to figure out what mode of transportation you're going to use getting around here. So you have to tell me whether you cheated on your wife when you were on earth. Now the first guy—"

My revelry with the Robertson folks at the French Outpost had ended quite abruptly at 10:30 or so for no apparent reason; people just started getting up from the table and leaving. I'd

He spoke of the rapture, the moment when the saved will be taken up into heaven from this world consumed with lust

Illustrations by Philip Burke

The Bush people gathered for a war council that morning in the Cupola Room at the top of the Grand

wondered if it was my beer. Now I was at the Bush Bash at the Village Inn. The Bush people were partying well past the midnight end time of the invitation; there was a cathartic hopeless feeling in the air. People were smoking, drinking, and dancing wildly, and Ryan Ambrozaitis, young Republican, was telling a joke about folks getting Cadillacs, VWs, or roller skates to move around heaven.

The two-guitar band struck up an oldie and Peter Secchia, the Republican national committeeman from Michigan and the chairman of a Grand Rapids lumber company, moaned with nostalgia. "Oh, I used to dance to this in high school. I need a big-titted woman to dance this one with."

"There," said Andy Anuzis, gesturing toward a lone woman.

"No, I need a big-titted woman."

Secchia bounced across the dance floor. A party leader at the bar said that the vote in Lansing may have ended friendships; when I said, "Which?" he looked darkly at Anuzis's back. Then Mary Matalin said Anuzis had a great future in the Michigan party, "if there still is a party."

Matalin was Bush's midwest regional political director, a tall pretty woman I'd seen everywhere, her mouth downturned as she watched the Robertson people run roughshod over the Bush camp. She handed me two drink tickets and then began dishing the Robertsonites. She'd heard that 200 believers were going to arrive "en masse" in some sort of flotilla the next day, possibly on a special Robertson ferry. She said that the Robertsonites were staying in dormitories at the other end of the island, a slap in the face of party tradition, which was to stay at the Grand (at $220 for the weekend).

I hung around for a while, and then when I started to go, I discovered that someone had swiped my tape recorder. My briefcase and papers were all there, but the tape recorder was gone. The chef gave me directions to the police station a block away.

It was 1:30 A.M., and outside the quaint traffic of cyclists and horses had stopped. The village was quite still as I stepped over smashed clods of horse manure in the street. Ahead of me a city sweeper pushed a full barrow to the barn that stood right behind the tiny police station.

By 7 A.M. Saturday morning, the Mackinac conference had been seized by a crime wave. There was my tape recorder, whose theft I secretly blamed on the Bush people and they secretly blamed on the Robertsonites. Then I learned that someone had broken into the Bush command post overnight, deleted information from the computer, and made off with two rolls of Bush stickers, eighteen styrofoam Bush hats, and some Bush American flags. Total dollar value of the loss was set at $280. John Engler, the lachrymose majority leader of the state senate and a Bush leader, said the burglary had been committed by "the sandman, the tooth fairy, or Santa Claus"—Bush code, it seemed, for *the preacher's people done it*. He said it in the same tone in which the Bush people reminded you that Robertson claimed to have used prayer to move a hurricane away from his Virginia headquarters.

Strangest yet was the morals incident. It seemed that when the Robertsonites suddenly began disappearing from the French Outpost the night before it was because someone had spotted pornography on the television over the bar. My back was to the screen, and no one had said anything to me, but Jon Beckwith, the president of a southern Michigan packaging company, who was friendly to the Robertsonites, had witnessed it—"total porn, the hard stuff."

So that morning Beckwith followed me and the Bush people to the tiny white wooden police station. Self-interest moved the Bush people and me; conviction carried Beckwith over the besmirched streets. He believed porn was a visual alcohol for men, an addiction that was destroying the most valuable unit this country has, the family unit. Just a month or two back, he said, he had turned on Detroit television and discovered an uncut version of a Bo Derek movie—and promptly switched it off.

But the police station was closed; all calls were being taken by the St. Ignace police on the Upper Peninsula, a few miles across the water. Beckwith left, disgusted.

The Bush people gathered for a war council that morning at the top of the Grand in the Cupola Room, from which the view of the lakes was startling. The melancholy Engler presided, reporting on the lawsuit over the rules question that was supposed to have been settled in Lansing. Many of those in the room were people whom the vote in Lansing had removed from the presidential process. The question there had been, should the party's nominees for state and county office in the last election automatically become delegates with power equal to duly-elected precinct delegates? The committee had voted no. If the Bush people won their suit to overturn the Lansing vote, about 1,200 party regulars—the nominees—would be added to the pool of 9,000 precinct delegates, diluting Robertson's strength among the 9,000. Engler made it sound as though the Bush people might have a case.

When Engler introduced Peter Secchia, some the dejection in the room lifted. Secchia was e old guard personified, a big fund-raiser, a fat t, leonine and overbearing. To a great extent e smugness of the Bush people was the smugss of money. "This whole thing is about ough and organization," Mary Matalin had id to me once hard-boiledly, but even in the e of the $17 million senate campaign, that emed a too-crude reduction of politics. Cerinly that proved to be the case in Michigan, here the Bush loyalists had been outdone by ople with passion and inspiration. "The Bible ys, 'People without a vision will perish,' " Bil- Konik, a Robertson supporter and party offial, told me.

"It's scary. You vote wrong, they go right to eir knees and pray to forgive you. It's scary as it," Secchia had whispered to me after the nsing vote earlier that week.

One of Secchia's graces was keeping profanity politics. "I'm so proud of my fucking candites I could shit," he'd said that night, and hen a Robertson leader with whom he'd feudl walked by, Secchia gave him the finger. Robtsonites never used foul language. "If I can use plain expression," Pastor Thompson had once id, and as I braced myself for "sonofabitch," said, "Pat Robertson just beat the pants off eorge Bush."

After his colleagues' low energy, Secchia's fecity was exciting. The Robertsonites were vackos," "crazies," "hook-line-and-sinkers." opped up on defeat's heedless adrenaline in nsing, Secchia had grabbed me by the neck d dragged me like a pup to a corner to murur, "It borders on Nazism and McCarthyism."

In the Cupola Room, Secchia tried to rally s people with talk of the party: "If we don't ve a party we have nothing."

But it was here that the people in the room emed slightly obsolete. The party as they ded it couldn't make room for Reagan's 1984 alition, with its admixture of traditional emocrats: evangelicals, blue-collar and ethnic ters, many of them Detroiters, many middle ass. Harry Veryser, the fellow Secchia had ven the finger to in Lansing, said the Kemp d Robertson people shared aspirations to do tter materially. That was why they'd supportl Kennedy so solidly in '60, and that was why ey'd turned against the McGovernite Demoatic party when it had seemed to be captured elitists. You could sense this us-against-them lf-consciousness even in Mary Giordano. Her mily of six—she lived with her folks—shared single-level brick home in a cramped developent not far from the Detroit line. When Mary d I had driven north to her church, past Thirteen Mile Road, Fourteen Mile Road, and so forth, we traveled toward higher real-estate values. Afterwards, she'd taken me to a loud, high-gloss restaurant near the northside auto plants; Mary ordered some kind of two-meat sandwich that was deep-fried, dusted with powdered sugar, and dipped in jam.

Once I'd asked Peter Secchia about Mary's congressional district and four others around Detroit in which Robertson and Kemp were strong. Secchia scoffed that these districts didn't elect Republicans—indeed, they were all represented in Washington by Democrats.

"But Ronald Reagan did well there," I said; Mary's district had given Reagan 63 percent of the vote in '84, and he'd done almost as well in the others.

"But there's no Republican party presence," Secchia insisted. With that he seemed to turn his back on Reagan's motley coalition: auto workers who had answered their union leaders' call to vote for Walter Mondale by handing out Reagan literature, people who ate tacky food and watched game shows, unwashed Detroiters who threatened the preeminence of the traditional Republican bastion, "Grannapids," as Secchia pronounced the state's second city.

"Before you leave," Secchia told the crammed cupola, "I think we need a quick round of applause for Andy Anuzis, who voted against us. Andy, you got a lot of county commissioners in Emmet county who want to talk to you—on the ferry."

People booed Anuzis, and Anuzis, who stood slanted against the doorjamb, offered a tight smile.

Then everyone started downstairs, past the fatalistic Bush backer who was handing out buttons that went, "No Matter What Happens in Michigan, Bush Will Win," into the range of Nancy Vollmer, a massive Robertsonite who had struggled with a steel cane up the four stories to the foot of the cupola stairs. She began shouting in a horrid voice.

"The conservatives will not vote for George Bush! I will not vote for George Bush!"

Clip-clop.

Noon, Saturday, and the first presidential candidate had arrived on the island. Bob Dole made flinty acerbic jokes at a press conference and luncheon, some on the wisdom of his having stayed clear of the Michigan process, which he said he'd happily never understood. He could afford to be cheery—he stands to gain the most when Michigan blows up January 30. His chief rival gets knocked out of first place by someone no one can stomach, voters in Iowa and New Hampshire turn to Dole, Bush becomes a rich ghost. (This is also the Kemp scenario.)

Dole could afford to be cheery—he stands to gain the most when Michigan blows up January 30

Up close Robertson had a too-long-on-TV look: smile wrinkles and a way of chuckling that made everything seem benign

The Dole lunch was the only conference event at which a humanist might feel at home. With his conversational manner, ironic baritone, and passion limited to such issues as how to get cloture on a filibuster, Dole might have been Preacher Bob of the Secular Circuit. His story about how he got into public life was sort of a humanist parable.

Russell, Kansas, 1950. Leaders of the local Republican and Democratic parties both visit the long-convalescing World War II veteran to urge him to run for the legislature. "They thought I could get elected because I'd been shot."

Dole wrestled with the offers and chose the Republicans.

Why? No talk of family values, God's will, Nazis, or crazies. The Republicans held a 2 to 1 registration advantage in Russell county.

Clippety CLOP!!

Saturday afternoon. The sun was out, giant flags had been hoisted on the longest porch in the world, the prognathous Robert Novak was buttonholing reporters to find out what Dole had said about the arms agreement, and a glass-windowed buggy tugged by horses with red headdresses glided glintingly alongside the Grand. No flotilla, no en masse—just forty Robertsonites gathered on the Grand steps and a third-floor veranda as the buggy disgorged its sleek attendants. I found myself staring at a curious thing, the luggage rack piled prosaically with boxes, one for a desk organizer.

More attendants, and then a square silver head poked free of the rear door and Pat Robertson came up the stairs, smiling genially, tilting his head in a fatherly manner. Up close he had a too-long-on-TV look: smile wrinkles and a benevolent twinklingness, a way of chuckling that made everything seem benign.

There were screams, Pay-at, Pay-at, as Robertson vanished into the hotel. The Robertsonites and the press crowded into a room where the Grand had hung blue velvet on the wall for the benefit of the TV cameras. Then the party p.r. guy made all the Robertsonites go out on the veranda and stand behind the glass doors to make more room for the press. They did so, and their meekness, for people who were so often vociferous, was surprising. It reflected the pastoral aspect of Robertson's campaign: Pat the shepherd of lamblike voters, the benevolent authoritarian.

Robertson kept us waiting a half hour. He only came into the room after his people engaged in a bit of officiousness I later learned they did everywhere: announcing that each reporter would get one follow-up question and that the press conference would end after *x* number of minutes. In contrast to Bob Dole's on-the-level quality, this fiat bespoke the Robertson campaign's philosophical underpinnings—its reliance on the pedestal. The electorate wanted a "hero," Harry Veryser, the president of the Michigan Conservative Union and a leading Robertson backer, had told me on my first visit to Michigan.

Robertson opened with a blunder. He said that he had heard that George Bush had overruled the wise counsels of the National Security Council in urging a dovish course on the arms treaty. Someone called him on it—Bush?—and Robertson got flustered, tilted his head, smiled and said, oh, he meant George Shultz.

"Forgive me," he said. "I just got off an airplane."

Then Robertson was asked about E. Spencer Abraham, the modest young chairman of the Michigan party who had voted against Robertson on the crucial rules question four days before. Robertson said he was not "wildly enthusiastic" about Abraham and that it was time to replace him with Veryser.

"He's still a fine gentleman, he's a fine person," Robertson then said of Abraham.

No one had asked Robertson to judge Abraham's humanity.

Late afternoon: Bush people napped, Mary Giordano went shopping for Calvin Kleins on sale, columnists worked on their net game, and crimes unraveled with psychological overtones.

Someone had found my tape recorder, scratched up but the tape still in it, and brought it to the police. Had I simply dropped it and then imagined the Bush people making off with it to hear Mary talking about God's will?

As for the porn incident, the manager at the French Outpost said his was a family-owned restaurant that would never tolerate porn and he was upset that Beckwith hadn't brought his objections to management's attention right then. Could it have been a music video that struck him as "total porn, the hard stuff"? Later I called the TV station Beckwith said had aired R-rated movies uncut; it said this was not the case.

The Bush stickers were found in an upstairs hallway but not the hats or flags. Mackinac Island Police Chief Lawrence Jones had detected no sign of forced entry, and he left his report ambiguous as to cause. Maybe someone had left the door open. Maybe a Bush loyalist had set the whole thing up.

People squeezed into evening dress, and I got lost in the Grand. Through the room with framed banalities about a 1959 visit by the Royal Couple—"spontaneous in their conversa-

ion, as they exchanged he binoculars which hey jointly used . . . animated, not stodgy." nto the old Museum Room full of pictures of gatherings past, of Lenore Romney when she was beautiful and not he hunched figure I'd seen earlier that day nanging on tightly to George's hand on the way out of the Grand's vast Salle à Manger.

The Museum Room was also the Bush command post. A few Bush people at the computer were gossiping.

"Here they are so religious and they're not dressed conservatively."

"You mean the one n the gold lamé?"

"The one with the stockings. With the seam."

"They had an orgasm when they saw him, they had to go nuts."

"There's one who dresses hideously."

"I saw two Robertson girls incredibly made up."

"*Tammy*."

In the ancient photos, Lenore was accompanied by the genetically and sartorially unassailable Happy Rockefeller—this in 1967 when Nelson Rockefeller and George Romney were about to go at one another for the nomination but still had the grace, the dignity, the savoir faire, the old world pre-coalition minority party complacency to cavort together on Mackinac.

Arrival; Cycling; After Golf (the captions said).

But this weekend none of the candidates had cycled or played golf together, the isolationist and interventionist wings had not been brought together, Bush's lion had not laid down with Robertson's lamb. The gold lamé Robertsonites had destroyed that happy picture. The Robertsonites were talking about moving state party conventions out of Grannapids, they'd thrown venerable Republicans off the state central committee, they'd voted to censure sitting congressmen because of votes against *contra* aid, they'd forced party meetings to Tuesday night because Wednesday night was church, they used "who" as the object of a . . . and then I remembered reading about a Chinese firework called the Monkeys Invade the Heavenly Palace. For the party regulars, that was it: the heavenly palace had been invaded, the throne was occupied by a great ape. His many daughters swarmed about the velvet armchairs and pine pillars and verandas and slid down the flagpoles and threw chalices of liquor out the windows, replacing them with chalices of Hawaiian Punch.

Yet wasn't it just the same for the Robertson people, their heaven, too, periled by monkeys?

The Robertsonites had glimpsed the real heavenly palace. Pastor/Chairman Thompson could even describe the feast tables up there. "How good I'll feel when I look at last at the face of Jesus," he'd said, beaming, but now those visions were overrun by fat galoots in dark suits who had no vision at all beyond this plush, striped, overpriced paradise, who appealed to courts of law and legislative chicanery when their cause was in doubt, who even if they weren't descended from apes . . .

In the football-gothic atmosphere at the Saturday night banquet, the Bush people reasserted control

Shrimp! Consommé! Filet! Baked Alaska!

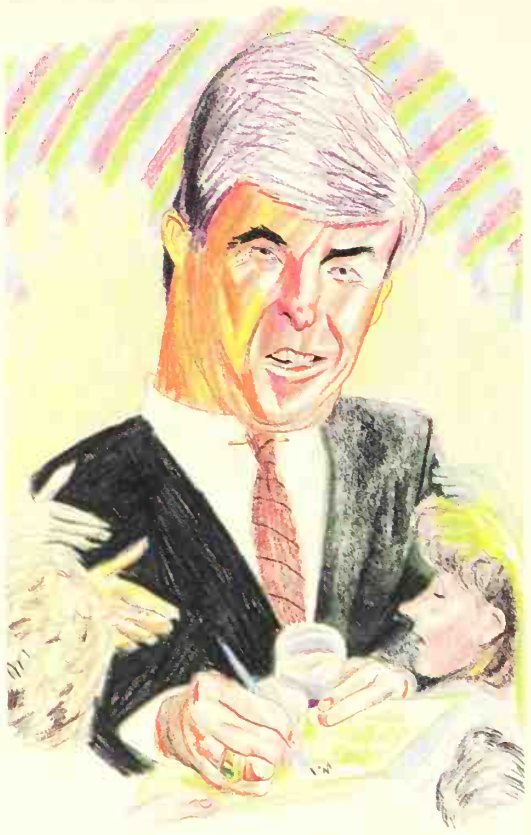
In the football-gothic atmosphere at the Saturday night banquet, the Bush people reasserted control. The preacher wasn't seated at the head table; his spiritual aura was dimmed by the aggressive pomp. Moreover, the Bush campaign had wheeled out a star of its own: Neil Bush, the cute and harmless son of the veep who, sporting a Norman Rockwellish spitcurl in the middle of his forehead, stood on the receiving line with a smile for everyone. Even if you spoke in tongues he'd speak to you. Nancy Vollmer, the Robertsonite, bulked into view, clad in black with a lace neckline and white shawl.

"We better work together or everybody will vote for Jesse Jackson," she told Neil Bush, abandoning her earlier anti-Bush hysteria. Actually, she was giving breath to a Robertsonite fantasy: the Democrats nominate Jackson in Atlanta in July, freeing the Republicans, a month later in New Orleans, from the burden of having to choose an electable candidate; freeing them, in other words, to nominate Robertson for a

The air was filled with nostalgia for the 1940s. Nostalgia for the days of a Republican minority

pure ideological battle. *The latter days, the last times.*

Black men in tails and white gloves captained the dinner service. A fat man with a white goatee played the marine hymn on the clarinet, Jack Kemp dipped into the crowd and did a woggly dance to the Notre Dame number, the band ran through countless football hymns, the throwback crowd went genteelly berserk over Michigan and State, Kathy Barks Hoffman of the *Lansing State Journal* asked, "How do you spell genteel?" "God Bless America," went the band, and a Great American Wife Figure in a pink sequined dress with a zigzaggy hemline and blond hair sprayed into a before-the-Flood meringue started singing. Everyone followed.



Lightning crashed over the lake and filled the air with nostalgia ions. Nostalgia for the 1940s. Nostalgia for the heavenly palace before the monkeys soiled the velvet. Nostalgia for a Republican minority.

And then everything changed. It was time for the keynote speaker, and the green stripes of the drapes suddenly turned into the stripes of a revival tent.

A round-shouldered man with a pale moonish face came to the podium to introduce Robertson. Harry Veryser is chairman of the twelfth district Republican party, and as he talked, Billye Konik, his vice-chair, told me she was watching for his "anointing," that moment when the "fire of God comes down and then suddenly Harry makes adamant positions and the truth starts pouring out of him." *Adamant, conviction, truth:* the evangelicals had brought idioms from the altar to the podium, and 1988 seemed like a rehearsal for the millennium.

And lo, Veryser was anointed. He said what was at stake in 1988 was "which conception of man will prevail": the view of man as "nothing but a sort of automatic typewriter, some sort of fancy IBM machine," which Veryser, the co-owner of a metal-stamping business, implied was the Democrats' idea, or the view that "the soul is immortal, and lives beyond the grave."

Then Pat Robertson came up. His "message," as he termed it, echoed Veryser's: the 1988 election was a clash between statism—"the philosophy of coercive utopians"—and the philosophy of free enterprise and family values.

"There is a spiritual renewal going on worldwide of unprecedented magnitude . . . Wherever you find men and women thrusting for God you also find them thrusting for freedom, repudiating socialism . . . and statism," he said. Thus he linked the Democrats' godless statism to the godless statism of Marxists around the world. So vague and general a conspiracy, it might even embrace George Bush. The speech resonated with vision, the clash of good and evil, the armies of you-know-who and you-know-who. "We are going to come to a time when we're going to be called upon as a party to unify and prevail."

Robertson was worked up, pink-colored, hoarse. He spoke in a high reedy bark and you could see only his slotlike smile and the weird silvery glint in his moist right eye. Storybook phrases poured from him—*island of freedom . . . enslave . . . ultimately . . . clash . . . invincible*—and his genial mask loomed not as just one other bozo in America but in mythic dimensions: the white whale, the horror behind the bland expanse. And the higher he rose, the more attractive figures out of another American myth began to look: the unimpassioned fixer, the Bob Dole, the Model T, the desk organizer.

Rain whipped the island, Jack Kemp joked that he would rather risk the lightning in Pat Robertson's plane than his own that night, Ronna Romney (George's daughter-in-law) cried out, "Don't go. . . . Can we all rise?" And we rose for the second playing of "God Bless America."

After supper on the longest porch in the world, Robertson headed out into the lightning with Harry Veryser, in a dull-brown trench coat, at his side. Then they were gone, leaving only the long wet shadow of Harry Veryser's deal.

A Catholic intellectual, a professor of economics, Veryser had been interested in Kemp until a year ago, when he lunched with Robertson in a Dearborn hotel. After satisfying himself that the preacher liked the gold standard and was not advocating a "moral police state," he switched sides. For a Goldwater conservative long on the outs in the state party, the switch had meant power: the Robertsonites had made him twelfth district chairman; soon they might make him chairman of the state party. Some people said Veryser was really still for Kemp, but it hardly mattered. Veryser said that by next summer in New Orleans, Bush or Dole might become acceptable, too, but only if he "postures himself correctly."

By then, Veryser's deal could well be the Republican party's. Pat Robertson will likely have ridden victory in Michigan (and good showings in Iowa and Minnesota) to March 8, Super Tuesday, where the evangelical voters of the South promise to give him a block of delegates. He could emerge a power, and if Bush or Dole or whoever does not satisfy him on the hard right issues, or if Bush pulls out victories in such states as Michigan using hardball tactics, Harry Veryser, Mary Giordano, and millions of other evangelicals will stay home. "I personally wouldn't be the feet for George Bush," Mary told me. And how comfortable would the Kemp ethnics, the streetsmart children of auto workers, feel with a Main Street or Wall Street candidate? In order to keep the feet of the party going, to keep the coalition together, the Republicans more than ever will have to take on Veryser's piebald complexion: libertarian economic ideals, anti-libertarian moral ones.

Is that the stuff of a majority coalition in 1988? Veryser says yes, it's the West plus the "old Confederacy" and right there are 249 electoral votes—just an Illinois or an Ohio short of victory. R. Marc Nuttle, Robertson's campaign manager, says that coalition is the one that gave the Republicans the Senate in 1980. But both men look backward; they may misjudge the political climate. Veryser, for instance, had also told me (in August) that opposing Robert Bork would turn out to be "a real bomb" for the Democrats in 1988 because it would make them look like a bunch of "Teddy Kennedy liberals . . . radical leftists . . . homosexuals, the whole Coxey's Army, the whole rainbow-coalition parade. . . . The more noise they make, the more the one hundred thirty-eight votes of the old Confederacy become unbolted from them. We'll carry everything from Virginia all the way out to the Pecos River in Texas."

But even as the monkeys were invading the heavenly palace that Friday, Bork was testifying, and already Veryser's judgment seemed off. The South was bolted on, the coalition against Bork was broader than Coxey's Army. And the Democrats had kept their wild men well hidden.

As for the Republican wild men, they were right there on the longest porch in the world for all to see, Harry Veryser raving about the gold standard, Peter Secchia whispering that the Robertsons were like Nazis, Mary Giordano claiming the Lansing vote was God's hand in politics, Jon Beckwith spotting pornography in a drop of rain. Now *there* was a Coxey's Army for you.

Hummers were a little like the Republican coalition, liable to coalesce sweetly or blow the lid off

What were hummers? Hummers were the drinks women in the Cupola Room made by jamming ice cream and rum and Kahlúa into a massive blender and clamping down the lid. Hummers were sipped by defiant/stricken/jowly Bush people; hummers were a little like the Republican coalition, liable to coalesce sweetly or blow the lid off.

A jazz band was playing at the Kemp gala and the departed Kemp was on the TV, in his locker-room mode, hatcheting the air with the sound off, the orange turned so far up he looked like Pumpkinhead.

The Robertsonites were partying at the lower end of the hotel. Someone played "You Are the Sunshine of My Life" on the piano, two women spooned out fruit punch.

I ran into Beckwith, who told me that he felt the need to liberate people in Communist countries as a debt to the signers of the Declaration of Independence, who he felt had "died for me."

Then Marianne Packer, the mother of Robertson lieutenant Lori Packer, said that Robertson's speech that night had convinced her that our fundamental freedoms were in danger.

"What are the symptoms of that?" I asked.

"Oh." She thought for a second. "I don't know—"

"Well can you name one symptom?"

"Oh, I don't know."

"You must be able to name one—"

"Well, pornography. That man over there was in a restaurant last night where they showed pornography—"

I left the longest porch in the world and the cleanest air in America and the gilt and green signs of the Grand's sloping vicarage. The village was wet and empty and on Market Street the night sweeper tramped splayfooted with his barrow to dump his pickings in the dray by the barn. I called out to him several times but he did not respond, just walked with his head tilted and his eyes closed, and then I saw he had on headphones with the music turned way up. His shoveling was done, but horsejuice had splattered the asphalt, and it would take three hours that morning to flush the streets.

PAGANS

By Rick DeMarinis

The gray Bavarian yodeling in the bathroom sent the New Year's party into a terminal slump. It was Dr. Selbiades's annual get-together for his patients. I'd been there less than an hour and had watched the party go from white-knuckle cheerfulness to unapologetic gloom.

Selbiades had been my shrink for almost a year. He was known as Doc Dow, after the chemical company. He believed in psychoactive drugs, not psychology. Psychology, he said, is rooted in semantics and semantics is rooted in the mind and the mind is a myth. There is the brain, the central nervous system, and there is the World. Sometimes they don't mesh. Chemistry is learning how to make them mesh. "We're in the Model–T era of psychopharmacology," he once said. "The future is gleaming with Volvos, BMWs, and Ferraris."

I believed him. Why shouldn't I have? The yodeling Bavarian only last year was a cataleptic wallflower in the state hospital. One dose of a new compound and he was goose-stepping to Wagner and asking for beefy women. I'd been brought from severe, broad-spectrum anxiety to chronic sulkiness in less than a year. I expected, any day now, a new ordering of the psychoactive rainbow to nudge me into a semi-persistent state of kindhearted tolerance. Nirvana, according to Doc Dow, always happens on the molecular level, regardless of the method used to achieve it. Without drugs it takes Spartan restrictions of sensory inputs, dietary extremism, and a kind of self-hypnosis. Our puritanical heritage, said the Doctor, makes us scoff at the notion that spiritual bliss can be gotten by swallowing capsules. But we are learning how to play the brain note by note, he said.

I was still a half-turn out of tune. It made me snappish and fussy. I affronted strangers for reasons I could not later explain. The yodeling Bavarian in the Selbiadeses' shower was a good example. He had wanted the tiled walls of the shower to call up the effect of sheer alpine slopes so that he could show us how it had been with him when he was a Nazi ski-trooper during the war. I was in the bathroom at the time, taking my second Elavil of the evening. The Bavarian had left the bathroom door open so that everyone could hear him. When I went out, I closed the door behind me. His yodels softened to a chirping lament. The stiffly seated guests looked at me, some with anger in their eyes, some with cruel hilarity. All rode the black horse, Despair.

"Some Nazi bastard like him killed my uncle," I said to the group. It was a lie, but I was shameless. That was another feature of my untuned brain. Cheap lies. I used them like salt and pepper. They gave an edge to the watery soup of my life.

I put on my parka and cap. "Leaving us so soon?" said Beth Selbiades, the doctor's stunning wife. What a full-blown, fine-haired animal you are, I wanted to say, but one does not speak churlishly to the high priest's wife.

"Got to get home," I finally mumbled.

I went out into a whirlwind of snowflakes. A warm, southerly blizzard had moved in, blanketing our town with heavy wet snow, pretty to re-

The Coming Triumph of the Free World, a new collection of Rick DeMarinis's stories, will be published next summer by Viking.

ember from the safety of July, but a misery to roll through. I was dressed for it, except for my oes, which were loafers.

I had walked out of my own New Year's party. aquel had kissed Sloan Capoletti, our milkan, hours before midnight. I took umbrage. laving been out of work for some time, I was versensitive to the carefree revels of the emloyed. Sloan had been giving us free cottage eese (unsalable cheese that had survived its spiration date) because he felt sorry for us. Or I thought. Then, as I watched the prolonged, pen-mouth kiss, I understood that his dated eese was meant to woo. After the hot kiss un- r that parasitic tree-killer, mistletoe, they ent into the kitchen where Sloan showed Rael how to brew saloop, a hot drink made of ssafras, sugar, and milk. A blood purifier, loan said. I was suspicious. Why did Raquel ep sassafras in her spice and herb cupboard? o please the milkman? Excellent for the bows, Sloan said. Why did the milkman want the owels of my wife to be excellent? The party beame a forest of symbols, all of them unfriendly me, even dangerous—pagan symbols, witch mbols: mistletoe, sassafras, and scented canes, the overdecorated Christmas tree fat and udy as an old whore leaning drunkenly in the rner. And then, as if I'd been the victim of an enly vicious practical joke, I began to receive eartening winks from total strangers. I needed walk.

I put on my parka and watch cap. Raquel cored me in the hallway. "What do you think u're doing?" she said.

I gave her the look I felt she deserved. "He's love with you," I said.

"I know," she said.

"You *know*?" I felt dizzy as my blood pressure obbled and peaked.

"Of *course* I know!" she said, with unashamed unk. "It's very harmless. He's a cute guy, loan is."

All I could do was stare at her as I zipped up e parka.

"Love is not harmless," I said, measuring out e words with some care.

She slapped her forehead and rolled her eyes. esus, *listen* to what you are saying for once," e said. She turned away from me and walked ck into the chaos of tooting horns, paper reamers, and the wet mouths of strangers. It as midnight in the eastern time zone, two ours away, but that was reason enough to toot ur horn and stick your tongue down somee's throat.

I slammed the door behind me and started alking the seven blocks to Dr. Selbiades's ouse. The planet had French-kissed itself rough several time zones as it mindlessly rolled down its doomed orbit. Though bells were ringing, horns were tooting, champagne corks were popping, I skulked away from it all, hating the manic pagans and their endless whoopee.

After I left the Selbiadeses' party, I walked aimlessly. I wandered into the North Side, a poorly lit district of tall Victorian houses. The area was famous for night crimes. Muggings, rapes, vandalism were the nocturnes played in these shadowy streets and alleys. I half expected a mugger to put a knife to my throat and didn't care. Then a man waved to me from a front porch. He was a tall, heavy man in a metallic green suit. "That you, Roger?" he asked.

I shrugged. "Why not?" I answered.

"Then come on in, we've been waiting to start. Did you get lost or something?"

"Yes and no," I said.

I climbed the sagging boards of the porch stairs. When I reached the big man, he threw his arms around me. "Peg Munson is nervous as hell," he whispered into my ear, his warm spittle electrifying it. "I'm Jerry Peters," he said, pumping my hand. "You know," he added, seeing my blank look, "group coordinator."

He took my arm and steered me into the house. Inside, seated on sofas, love seats, and armchairs, were about a dozen people, men and women in their late thirties or early forties. "Here's the missing person," Jerry said, slapping me on the back. "Roger. . ." he fumbled with a piece of paper, a computer printout, squinted at it, ". . . Roger *Flexnor*. Now we can get the show on the road."

It was easy to figure out that everyone here was a stranger to everyone else and that Roger Flexnor, whoever he was, was expected to round out the group: six males, six females. I guessed it was some kind of dating club for hopeless cases. I felt right at home.

People on one of the sofas scooted over, making room for me. I sat between a pale, bearded man and a small, plump woman. "I'm Peg Munson," the woman said.

"Where's your data sheet?" she said.

I slapped my coat pockets, dug in my pants.

"Here's an extra," Peg Munson said, giving me a carefully folded printout. I saw her name, a paragraph giving a general (somewhat generous) physical description, and a personal statement. ("Professional woman, master's degree, likes walks in the rain, poetry that speaks directly to the soul, good conversation over gourmet dinners; expects to share her considerable resources, both physical and spiritual, with a man of corresponding substance.")

I refolded the data sheet and slipped it into my pocket, wondering what Roger Flexnor had

to offer such a woman.

". . . tall, scientifically oriented man," Peg read, from the data sheet of Roger Flexnor, "desires *affaire d'amour* with mature, Christian lady with unusually small features . . ." She giggled self-consciously; then, splaying her fingers in her lap, revealed to me a set of miniature hands without visible knuckle. This is what Roger Flexnor desired most in a woman. I glanced down at her feet and saw that they were also miniatures. Flexnor, whoever he was, would be sweaty with lust by now.

Jerry Peters, our host, said, "All right one and all, let's get right down to it. We're not children, and it's a brand new year. At least it will be in fifteen minutes. There's no need to stumble and bumble. I suggest we break with the past, whatever *that* might be, and give our Rocky Mountain Dating Service partners a big how-do-you-do happy New Year kiss."

A woman, almost as big as Jerry Peters, stood up and kissed him with shocking energy. I leaned toward Peg Munson and she closed her eyes and offered me her Kewpie-doll lips.

"You're shy," she said, after the pecking kiss. "I am too. I guess the computer knows how to match personality types."

Peg Munson not only had little hands and feet, she also had tiny facial features. Lips, nose, and eyes were set close to one another to produce a smallish face. Her head was a distraction: it was nearly full-sized. "I've always wanted to know a Christian man who had a passion for nuclear science," she said, breathy with growing interest.

Then the real Roger Flexnor came in. "Sorry everybody," he said, stamping snow off his shin-high mukluks. "I just could *not* get the chains on my car. I had to have the Exxon people do it." He was a tall, white-haired man in heavy glasses.

"Who are *you*?" Jerry Peters said.

"I'm Roger. Roger Flexnor, Ph.D. You're expecting me. I'm here for Peg Munson." He waved his printout, as his glasses fogged over in the warm room.

I got up and walked through the awkward silence until I was back out on the street. The street seemed the place for me that New Year's Eve. Jerry Peters called to me from the porch. "Hey, it's okay, citizen," he said. "Next time, though, try going through Central Data. We've got uplinks throughout the Northwest. Check out our ad in tomorrow's paper. There's someone out there who loves you. Believe it."

I didn't believe it. I waved to him and began walking toward downtown, another two or three miles into the wind.

The city streets were bright with holiday decorations but empty. I went into the first bar I came to, a place I'd never been in called The Loose Caboose, a velveteen and leatherette night spot with a scandalous reputation. But I was cold, and brave with self-pity.

The Loose Caboose was nearly empty. One drunk in a three-piece suit at the bar, two guys in designer sweats huddled in a booth. A big TV over the bar was showing us what New Year's night in New York was like. I ordered a bourbon and soda, and then another. An oily, old-time band singer in a tux began his version of "I'll Take Manhattan," Times Square celebrants roaring behind him.

My feet were aching with cold. The third bourbon made them feel like they were Roger Flexnor's feet.

"I know utter dejection when I see it," said one of the designer-sweatsuit guys. He was at the bar, ordering drinks for himself and his friend but looking at me.

"Good for you," I said.

"Say, listen," he said. "Delvin and I are going dancing later. You want to tag along? My name is Jeffrey, Jeffrey Hazeltine."

Delvin came up behind me. He put his arm around my shoulders. "Do I get the first dance or not?" he said to me, his voice sharp with a habitual pout.

"Not," I said.

Outside The Loose Caboose I realized that the walk back home was uphill. I jerked the strings of my parka hood tight and set out.

Three blocks into my trek, a car pulled alongside me. It was the pair from The Loose Caboose. "You need a ride?" Delvin asked.

"I need a ride *home*," I said.

"Hop in."

I did. I sat in the back while the two friends cuddled up front. I held no opinions about all this. Opinion-holding had been one of the first casualties of my condition. Not that I didn't have opinions, I just didn't hold them. Everything was open to dispute, mutation, or outright cancellation.

I had an opinion about everything that had happened to me that evening, but also knew that I would not defend it tomorrow even if I could remember what it was. It seemed to me that all the people I had been with were puppets to a hidden agony, and could not find simple peace until the puppet master had lost interest in them. They had been yanked down their lives with seismic disregard. They didn't know where they were. They wanted their bearings and were willing to risk a lot to find them.

I revised this opinion a few times before giving it up. I wished the whole stumbling lot of us a lucky New Year. Then I remembered Sloan Capoletti. I leaned into the front seat. "Drive faster, Jeffrey," I said. ■

THE PHILOSOPHER DESPOT

Allan Bloom's elitist agenda

By Benjamin Barber

Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* is not a book, it is a phenomenon: one of those mega-literary comets that dazzles without being clearly seen, and thus mesmerizes its critics as it speeds across America's celebrity firmament. The perplexities are staggering. How does an obscure academician known chiefly for his translations of Plato and Rousseau become a national celebrity? How can a book about the decadence of esoteric European philosophers such as Heidegger climb to the top of the best-seller list for over six months and sell nearly a half-million copies in hardback? Why are Americans so anxious to welcome a book that claims they can't read, so willing to accept a polemic that excoriates their literary intelligence? Why are liberal critics and egalitarian educators beside themselves with admiration for what can only be called a raging assault on liberal tolerance and democratic education?

From its publication last spring, *The Closing of the American Mind* took the country as much by surprise as by storm. The publisher printed only 10,000 copies of a book that at least one major publisher had turned down in a preliminary version. Bloom's beatification began mildly enough with a *New York Times* daily review calling his treatise a "remarkable" exercise in "electric-shock therapy" for complacent teachers; the Sunday *Book Review* picked up steam by lauding it as "an extraordinary meditation on the fate of liberal education in this country." Unqualified raves from many other critics followed, culminating in major spreads in weeklies such as *Newsweek*.

By late last summer, still a best-seller, the book had become a touchstone for every imaginable contemporary debate on education, as well as a totem for the neo-conservative assault on higher education, affirmative action, equal opportunity, rock music, the Sixties, the young, and sex. In September George Will paid homage to Bloom in a *Newsweek* column titled "Learning From the Giants." George Levine ran a controversial national colloquium on Bloom at Rutgers University, and *Reader's Digest* took a full-page ad in the *New York Times* to reprint their editor's version of what was called Allan Bloom's decisive "answer" to the question "What's wrong with American education?" Typical of the hyperbolic hoopla was a three-part cover story in *Insight* that referred to Bloom's argument as "the most penetrating analysis of the United States to appear in many years." The book is now descending from its apogee, but its extraordinary trajectory suggests a phenomenon that has yet to be explained.

What on earth is going on here? It certainly is not the old literary love story, for the affection America seems to feel for Bloom is anything but reciprocated. It is as if the professor and the country have met on a blind date and the country, though found sorely wanting by the professor, nevertheless insists on finding the professor irresistible. He charges Americans with flat-souled philistinism, and they buy almost a half-million copies of his scathing denunciation. He claims the country has deserted the university and blames democracy for the debacle, so the country adopts him as its favorite democratic educator.

Can the mystery be unraveled? We know well enough how this peculiar land of paradox—ambivalent land of the free—can make paradoxical heroes out of freedom's severest critics. How it offers popular success to those who contemn its popular virtues; and how, to those who disdain its materialism, it offers riches. *The Oth-*

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Bloom's Sixties-bashing sounds like the screeching of an aged parent wrapped in a Roman toga

er America, The Making of a Counter Culture, and *The Greening of America* had similar receptions. Yet those books were written in the spirit of progress and reform; they saw American reality as out of tune with the promise of the American soul, and they called for progress not reaction. In *The Closing of the American Mind* we confront a different phenomenon: a most enticing, a most subtle, a most learned, a most dangerous tract. What we have here is an extraordinary and adept exercise in the Noble Lie aimed at persuading Americans that philosophy is superior to ordinary American life and philosophers superior to ordinary American citizens; and consequently this nation's higher education ought to be organized around the edification of the *few* who embody philosophy rather than the *many* who embody America.

Bloom's book is as artful and painless a piece of subversion as we are likely to encounter from a critic of democracy. For it is written by a philosopher for whom rhetoric is "a gentle art of deception," a polemicist who believes political writing in a democratic society is necessarily an act of concealment. If Americans have failed fully to understand what Bloom means, it may be because Bloom has not said exactly what he means—or does not mean exactly what he has said. In its overt hostility to all the "leading notions of modern democratic thought" such as "equality, freedom, peace, [and] cosmopolitanism," *The Closing of the American Mind* would seem to qualify as one of the most profoundly anti-democratic books ever written for a popular audience. That, however, is not how Bloom puts it. Ever the prudent educator, Bloom believes that to say exactly what you mean about liberty and equality when you live in a liberal democratic state is to court the fate of Socrates, who was tried and executed by the Athenians for thinking little of their liberty and less of their democracy. Not one of the critics raving about the nobility of Bloom's philosophical project for the reconstruction of the American soul seems to have noticed that his philosopher "loves the truth" but "he does not love to tell the truth." The leading characteristic of this ostensible paean to the virtues of open discourse is in reality a commitment to closed communication—to esoteric meaning and rhetorical ambivalence.

Bloom's celebrants have accepted his intent as stated in his preface:

> This essay—a meditation on the state of our souls, particularly those of the young, and their education—is written from the perspective of a teacher. . . . [who is] dedicated to liberal education. . . Attention to the young, knowing what their hungers are and what they can digest, is the essence of the craft.

Commentators have treated his book as a racy companion volume to E. D. Hirsch's *Cultural Literacy*, with which it seems to share a yearning for a more civilized culture and an affection for the so-called Great Books. Typical of this interpretation is the *Reader's Digest* review:

> [Bloom] tells us the closing of the American mind has resulted directly from "openness"—that perverse new virtue which urges us to be non-judgmental and prevents us from "talking with any conviction about good and evil." . . Yet Americans long for something lost—the great moral truths upon which civilization rests. . . . Education is not merely about facts—it is about *truth* and the "state of our souls". . . If there is a reassertion of moral truth rather than relativistic values, this book will be remembered as a catalyst.

The Allan Bloom honored by the critics is the philosophical moralist, doing battle with the forces of philistinism, relativism, and nihilism that beset a civilization living in the valley of the shadow of death—that is to say, in the shadow of the death of God. He appears in their encomiums as liberal humanist and concerned teacher, making war on students who fail to live up to the Socratic ideal.

With the artful and worshipful interlocutors of Socrates perching as archetypes in his imagination, Bloom can hardly be other than appalled by the average American eighteen year old, who is more than a little artless and never very reverent, particularly toward teachers. Bloom rails with indignation at the young and what the corruptions of democratic education (the Sixties) have done to them. He is repelled by their tastes, their pastimes, their sexual practices, their "niceness," their music, their reading habits, their lack of "prejudices," and their "flat-souled" lack of nobility. No wonder he complains that "Harvard, Yale, and Princeton are not what they used to be—the last resorts of aristocratic sentiment within the democracy." At times Bloom's unrelenting Sixties-bashing sounds like the screeching of an aging parent wrapped in a Roman toga—ranting about the nobility of the ancients because he cannot comprehend his daughter's purple hair. When he tells us that an American university which pledges itself to serve democracy's needs is indistinguishable from a German university which dedicates itself to the service of Nazism, or that Woodstock is the American Nuremberg (flower children listening to Jimi Hendrix are to be regarded as clones of black-shirted fascists organizing a new era of genocide), we may wonder what has happened to the philosopher in search of great souls.

Yet underlying Bloom's hostility to the Six-

es is a more profound anger. Like the champi-
as of the new conservatism, Bloom is hostile
ot only to the moral decline of the university
nd its students but to much of what demo-
ats and progressives have accomplished in
e last fifty years. He does not simply oppose
minism or the abolition of the double standard
the abstract, he condemns them because they
estroy the old sexual arrangements whereby a
an could "think he was doing a wonderful
ing for a woman, and expect to be admired for
hat he brought." Feminists are not merely the
estroyers of the family, they are "the latest en-
ny of the vitality of classic texts," and since
assic texts are the touchstones of a philosophi-
l society, of civilization itself.

Bloom is aghast at modern value-relativism—
at the young have neither values nor even
ejudices—but he is also censorious about the
lues they choose to embrace. Thus, to him a
ncern for nuclear survival is bogus posturing;
elief in tolerance is a sign of moral flabbiness;
be "nice" and "without prejudices" merely
nderscores shallowness. Bloom condemns not
st equality and the struggle for rights (which
believes have in any case been "won"), but
e notion of rights itself, which for him means
dication to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of
operty and sex." The true villains are then
ither Betty Friedan nor Abbie Hoffman but
ich Fromm and John Dewey—not the armed
ophets of the Weather Underground but the
more dangerous unarmed prophets of thera-
utic salvation and the brotherhood of man.

Bloom opposes democratic values not only as
conservative ideologue but as a philosopher
dded to reason. It is not really the last twenty
even the last fifty years that disturb Allan
oom: it is the last two hundred years. The
oblems go back at least to the French Revolu-
on and to those aspects of the philosophy of
lightenment that led to the Revolution,
nce, as always for Bloom, history proceeds out
ideas rather than the other way around. In
ct, nothing has been quite the same since a
urt composed of distrustful Athenian freemen
t noble Socrates to death for the crime of be-
g a truth-speaking philosopher in an opinion-
verned society. The great divide is less
tween modern conservatives and modern
mocrats than between ancients and mod-
ns—the central theme of Bloom's mentor and
acher, the great University of Chicago politi-
l philosopher Leo Strauss.

The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche
gnals the final eclipse of the ancient world for
oom. Bloom's ambivalence about Nietzsche is
ne of the more impenetrable puzzles of *The losing of the American Mind*, a puzzle that akes its profoundly anti-democratic argument difficult for critics to apprehend. Bloom is simultaneously full of praise for Nietzsche's analysis of modernity (he is "an unparalleled diagnostician of the ills of modernity") and full of indignation at what he considers to be the American trivialization of Nietzschean philosophy. This he regards as the primary cause of the closing of the American mind.

Nietzsche is at once hero and villain, astute cultural critic of bourgeois culture in the abstract, but nefarious corrupter of American youth in practice. Bloom's ambivalence about him is rooted in his distrust of democracy. Like Voltaire, who urges gentlemen to send their servants out of the room before debating whether God actually exists, Bloom worries not about Nietzsche's nihilistic announcement of the death of God, but about what philistine Americans may make of this unhappy news. The danger is not philosophical relativism, but pop relativism; not Nietzsche, but the "doctrinaire Woody Allen" whose way of looking at things "has immediate roots in the most profound German philosophy." If Woody Allen as a pop Nietzsche seems farfetched, Bloom himself often seems like a slightly paranoid Tocqueville who, burdened by an aristocratic background and Continental manners, finds himself inexplicably residing in the state of Illinois among barbarians he both worships and despises.

Bloom is hostile to much of what progressives have accomplished in the last fifty years

As a modern, Bloom cannot really deny that the credentials for both absolute Truth and a Supreme Being have become philosophically suspect: Nietzsche was merely the messenger for the news of their delegitimation by science and the Enlightenment. The trouble lies neither in the messenger nor in the message, but in the hungry masses that, equipped with a democratic education, beg to receive the grim tidings. These tidings only strip them of their myths and their religious comfort. Because the masses are constitutionally unfit for philosophy, the Truth leaves them defenseless and renders them dangerous. Faced with the news of God's death and Truth's uncertainty, mass man in America has simply put his soulless self in God's place, to the peril of learning, philosophy, and civilization. The demise of Authority engenders the Revolt of the Masses, whose trivialized mass culture is at war with everything noble and good. Virtue gives way to utility, reason to passion, the good to self-interest.

But how to tell such things to mass man himself? Men possessed of the idea that each of them is God must be handled carefully. To remind them of their own mortality and to tell them of the death of God may work terrible pain upon them. To avenge their suffering the mes-

We are finally much too practical a people for Bloom's taste

senger might be executed! The solution Bloom can only hint at (the philosopher cannot speak honestly) is certainly not to inundate the masses with books they cannot understand and are likely to misconstrue. Rather, it is to send them—like Voltaire's servants—out of the room. Bloom notes and his admirers delight in the great irony by which "openness" (which produces relativism and then nihilism) has led to the closing of the American mind. They might do well to note the still greater irony that reopening the American mind may for Bloom depend on the closing of the American university—since open minds seem to function best in highly selective, closed schools. To the educable, an education; to the rest, protection from fearsome half-truths, and a diet of noble lies such as may be required to insulate the university from mediocrity and democratic taste. Affirmative action puts into the classroom young men who can learn from Hobbes and Nietzsche only the lesson of the rightfulness of their appetites; feminism puts into the classroom young women who can learn from Dewey and Freud only the lesson of their equality with, or perhaps even their sexual superiority to, men. Philosophy is not finally to be saved by handing out Great Books to small minds, but by locking the library doors.

Bloom is remarkably candid about the nature of "the real community of man," which "is the community of those who seek the truth, of the potential knowers." To be sure, this community "in principle" includes all men "to the extent they desire to know. *But in fact this includes only a few, the true friends, as Plato was to Aristotle . . .*" (emphasis added). Bloom's rhetorical journey finally begins and ends with the ancients—with Socrates. How much misery mankind might have been spared; what revolutions, what prejudices, what myths, what armed braggarts might have vanished from the historical landscape, had the Athenians loved and followed Socrates instead of executing him.

Bloom's democratic admirers overlook his belief that democracy for the many (those not like him) and education for the few (those like him) proceed from radically incompatible premises. According to Bloom, society ought ideally to be arranged to achieve the latter even if it means undermining the former. "Never did I think," he writes, "that the university was properly ministerial to the society around it. Rather I thought and think that society is ministerial to the university . . ." Without the university thus understood, the theoretical life collapses "back into the primal slime" (presumably democratic society) from which it "cannot re-emerge."

The citizen of a democracy who understands what Bloom intends in the honor he pays Socrates will be wary in the face of Bloom's modern pedagogical claims. The citizen has every reason to mistrust the philosopher who mistrusts him. After all, it was the tyranny of "Truth" politicized that justified the divine right of kings, the Inquisition, the Reign of Terror, and such modern orthodoxies as totalitarianism.

Bloom may not be arguing that "the old [forms] were good or that we should go back to them," but he has two crucial quarrels to pick with America: the quarrel of the philosopher with democracy and equality; and the quarrel of the ambivalent cosmopolitan both with the European decadence he fears and the American philistinism he despises. The quarrel between philosophy and democracy is the quarrel between Socrates and Athens, and we have seen how deeply that struggle affects Bloom. The quarrel between America and Europe is more complex, and Bloom is torn between the two.

Champion of an innocent America corrupted by the tainting cynicism of Europe's anti-philosophies, Bloom sees himself as a loyal but knowing son of the Republic anxious to protect its less-sophisticated citizens from the Old World's newfangled nihilisms. If it is true that God has died (and there are times when Nietzsche's bad news seems also to be Bloom's bad news), don't tell the Americans! They already have a penchant for the vulgar, the novel, and the experimental, and will seize on God's withdrawal from the cosmos as a reason to try to master it themselves. In place of the tragic acceptance that characterized the ancients, the Americans will deploy ideologies of reform, growth, progress, and revolution. With their hands clasping computers and spliced genes, and their heads bursting with progressive ideologies from Marxism to welfarism, they will set out to replace their vanished Creator and improve upon his handiwork.

Nonetheless, even as Bloom cherishes America's insularity from the contagion of European cultural relativism, he cherishes Europe. As an American he may be suspicious of Europe's cynical intellectuals, but as a partisan of Europe, he is even more suspicious of America's self-righteously innocent anti-intellectuals. With innocence comes a simpleminded disdain for ideas that, as the historian Richard Hofstadter has noticed, inures us to books and debases our souls. We are finally much too practical a people for Bloom's taste: philosophy enjoins reflection, but the "hidden premise of the realm of freedom [America] is that action has primacy over thought." Bloom's aristocratic hostility to America's spirited practicality, to its optimism about change (America as the New World), to its belief in the second chance,

linds him to certain strengths of the American olity, as well as to the relationship of ordinary uman beings to books.

America's true philosophers are not book-ien or academicians or theorists. They are oets such as Emily Dickinson and Walt Whit-an, essayists such as Henry Adams and Ralph Valdo Emerson, lawyers such as James Madison nd Hugo Black, and moral leaders such as John Brown, Susan B. Anthony, and Martin Luther King Jr. Bloom can argue with Dewey while Leo Strauss argues with Nietzsche, but America's rue educators dwell elsewhere; their podiums re found in the open air rather than the library, he town hall rather than the seminar hall.

We continue to learn more from our doers an from our talkers, from Jefferson and Frank-n, Eugene Debs and Robert Taft, Harry Hop-ins, and, yes, even David Stockman. Bloom earns for heroes and condemns us for having one worthy of the name, but what democrats spire to is, as Brecht has written, not a country hat has no heroes but a country that needs no eroes. At their best, Americans have been heir own heroes, their nation a creation of nonymous settlers, cattlemen, garment work-rs, grade-school teachers, factory laborers, en-epreneurs, farmers, longshoremen, inventors, nd just plain folks. Bloom simply gets America rong. If Americans lack confidence in those ho claim to possess Truth, it is because they re the descendants of immigrants who fled such ruth-sayers. Disguised as inquisitors, prosecu-ors, and king's counselors, such dogmatists im-ressed their Truths on the illiterate "rabble" in he form of chains. Bloom (it is almost as if he isses the chains) longs for the days in which rotestants and Catholics, hating each other, emonstrated they were "taking their beliefs se-ously." Is the average American to be faulted or preferring the frivolous shallows of religious olerance to the seriousness of the Salem witch-unts?

The lugubrious lesson Americans may wish to raw from both Socrates and Bloom is that the hilosopher's ideal of the open mind seems to ourish best in a closed society where, if philos-phers do not rule, those who do rule must defer philosophy. We ought to remember that be-evolent autocrats like Frederick the Great ade comfortable homes for philosophers such s Voltaire, even as those philosophers con-eived rational blueprints in which there would e no room for kings. The king can at least pre-end to be philosophical, whereas the self-gov-rning common man will disdain the superior irs of both philosophers and kings. Tyrants ay indeed be better friends to Truth than citi-ens who must learn how to live with uncertain-y and difference. We citizens can understand why a philosopher of noble intentions may be aghast at a society moved by the suspicion that one man is as good as the next; but, still, we might be expected to meet the philosopher's subtle arguments with something more than a weak and self-nullifying cheer. For we are being asked implicitly to choose between the open mind and the open society, being asked to close the university to the many in order to secure it for the few, being asked to make reflection and its requisites the master of action and its requisites, being asked finally to turn the democratic culture that ought to be the university's finest product into the servant of universities that produce something called Truth. And how we answer such questions will not only affect what kind of education we will have, but whether we will remain a free and egalitarian society devoted to justice, or become a nation of deferential tutees who have been talked out of our freedom by a critic of all that has transpired since the ancient world gave way to the modern.

A great many Americans have come to sympathize with Bloom, anxious about the loss of fixed points, wishing for simpler, more orderly times. President Reagan's longing for a court filled with somber purists, his attorney general's belief in a doctrine of original intentions that turns the flexible genius of the Constitution into a Rosetta stone by which every modern conflict might be resolved, the secretary of education's campaign against the educational reforms of the Sixties, the Moral Majority's demand that the whole nation be subjected to drug testing—these are so many cries to be delivered from the twentieth century. These are the voices not of mere conservatives but of zealots, the anxious ones who see in the victories of liberty only the specter of anarchy; in equality, the victory of mediocrity; in social justice, a warrant for envy and disorder. Allan Bloom's book offers certainty to the confused and comfort to the fearful. It is a new Book of Truth for an era after God. Its only rival is democracy, which Bloom, with those he comforts, can only despise.

Nevertheless, the ideology of democracy is a sound, one might even say noble, response to the dilemmas of modernity: it permits us to live with our uncertainty, our agnosticism, our doubt, our sense of abandonment, our isolation, without murdering one another; it even promises a modicum of justice made up of equal parts of compassion and tolerance. It does not rescue us from our era, but it helps us live with its perils. The most apt response to Bloom's attempt to teach us how to be noble might be for us to teach him how to be democratic. It might even be that he would get the better of the exchange. ■

The most apt response to Bloom's attempt to teach us how to be noble might be to teach him how to be democratic

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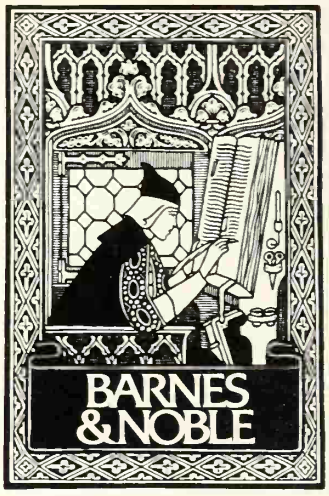

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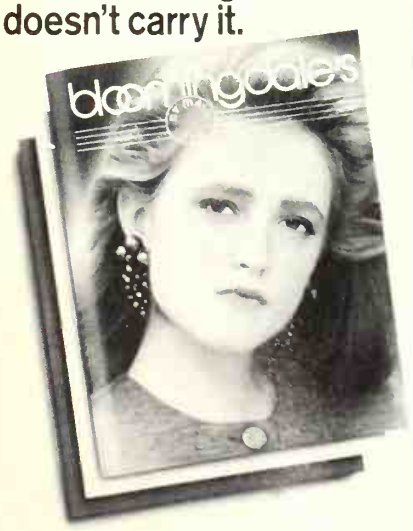

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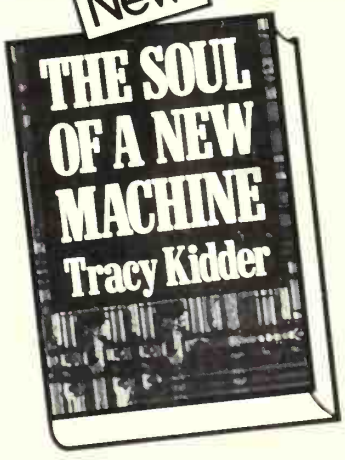

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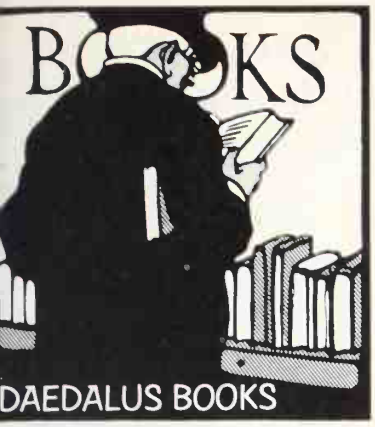

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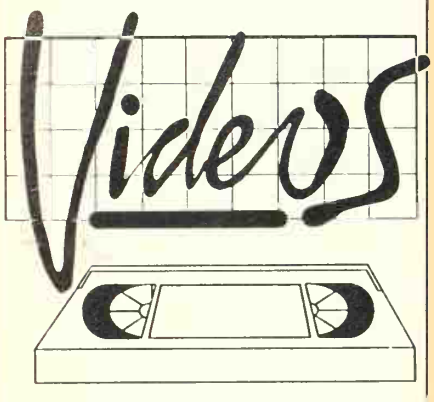

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DO NOT PRINT THIS LETTER

Hating my hate mail

By Alexander Theroux

Hate mail—the postal equivalent of spitting—is one of the many methods of attack devised by the human species. It is also one of America's quiet cottage industries. I'm not talking about letters querulous or quizzical, but those confined to direct abuse. Worse than being booed or shouted down, closer to being actually threatened and maimed, they are the kind commonly received by politicians, clergy, talk-show hosts, columnists, writers, or just about anyone who goes up in front, on the air, or into print.

I published a short story last year which provoked a spate of phone calls and angry mail. It was a piece of satirical fiction about a fat Italian woman who brutalized the daughter she envied for the love she herself never had or merited. It was vicious caricature, I was told. I was blamed because Italian women were not like this. I was blamed by others because they were. I was anti-Catholic, anti-Italian, anti-feminist. Most of the letters were hateful; some gibbered. Many were illiterate—I counted eleven misspellings in one—and every one of them missed the point of the story.

"A pusilanimous [*sic*] insult to all people of Italian heritage," the president of a local Sons of Italy wrote to me, "and disgraceful! I find bigottry [*sic*] of this kind best left in the gutter where it belongs." Another elegant response was: "You call that a story? You're no better than yourself, if you ask me"—which of course I hadn't. "I don't see why you don't write something decent about people," wrote another. "Italians are always the brut"—the brunt? the butt?—"of this kind of poisonous attack, as if there weren't Jews or Negroes."

All these years writing fiction and nonfiction have forced me to recognize one unavoidable fact. There is a small subculture out there ready at the drop of a hat to split a hair, deny a fact, squash an opinion, catch a misprint, contest an idea, quibble with a thought, but more than anything else, intentionally misunderstand. There is a certain kind of mind, the crank's, that becomes tenacious only when it's offended.

The letter-writing crank is typically emotional on a single subject—fluoride, communism, zoning, etc. Narrowness alone shapes his faith. It is a tragic fact of human nature that so few feel the asperity of another's pain. Races and nationalities stick together, yet nothing seems to yoke one group's misery to another's. Sadly, not a single letter I received was from a non-Italian (something that might have heartened me). A lack of ecumenism is virtually at the root of all hate mail.

Nothing enrages us more than seeing in others the very vice we ourselves constantly commit. It's the madman alone who calls you foolish, the bigot in his parochial harangues who accuses you of what he most despises in himself. Hate mail is almost always confessional. I suspect that a woman bearing an uneasy likeness to my fat protagonist—possibly a mother, a sister, or a wife—in fact exists or existed in the lives of many of the outraged people who wrote to me. Suddenly a secret between you and your reader has been divulged; the crank finds it intolerable. There's something in hate mail that confirms the fact that truth is hard to swallow. It also proves almost by algebra the worth of what you, the author, have created; in a wonderful parody you are virtually vindicated by the very accusations made against you.

I had no experience with hate mail until I began teaching in rural Virginia in the 1960s. I couldn't help noticing every Sunday that black people were being turned away from the Baptist church in the small town where I lived. So I wrote a letter to the local paper, pointing out that any Christian church excluding anybody because of race or color should be turned into a Dairy Queen. I soon learned that it's better to have an enemy than an ideology—one thinks of Meir Kahane calling Arabs dogs. The following months I received no end of fierce and manic letters, desperate emanations as if they themselves, like existential assertions of any sort, became a form of self-preservation: Reverse boasts. Paranoid defenses. No

Alexander Theroux's most recent novel, An Adultery, *was published by Simon and Schuster last fall.*

nd of blame-shifting.

The great Victorian novelist Thomas Hardy once opened a package sent to him from Australia and inside found a copy of his novel *Jude the Obscure* ripped into tiny pieces, with the note appended: "I believe you're the anti-Christ!"

Hardy lived another thirty years and never wrote another novel.

In June 1948 Shirley Jackson published her famous story, "The Lottery," in the *New Yorker*. "It was just a story," Jackson has said. A moral allegory revealing the blind and hidden evil of the human soul, the story is told in the most casual way of a certain social ritual in a small New England-type town where, on a sunny day in a village square, a woman is chosen by lottery and then stoned to death.

The story became immediately controversial. Phone calls began to pour in to the magazine. The letters, arriving in batches, were forwarded directly to Jackson in Vermont, and they grew increasingly more vehement. And vicious. And dangerous. The postmaster would no longer speak to her. Neighbors shunned her. By mid-July she seriously began to wonder if she should leave the state.

"One of the most terrifying aspects of publishing stories and books," she wrote some years later, "is the realization that they are going to be read, and read by strangers. I had never fully realized this before, although I had of course in my imagination dwelt lovingly upon the thought of the millions and millions of people who were going to be uplifted and enriched and delighted by the stories I wrote. It had simply never occurred to me that these millions and millions of people might be so far from being uplifted that they would sit down and write me letters I was downright scared to open; of the 300-odd letters that I received that summer I can count only thirteen that spoke kindly to me, and they were mostly from friends."

Nothing better indicates the type of correspondent Miss Jackson faced, than when she added, "Most people at first were not so much concerned with what the story meant; what they wanted to know was where these lotteries were held, and whether

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Zionism — Is It Racism?

Twelve years ago, the United Nations General Assembly passed by overwhelming vote a Resolution that equated Zionism with racism, something to be condemned by all people and by all nations. It was the highwater mark of public anti-Zionism and anti-Israelism. Does this Resolution have any validity?

What are the facts?

■ Before deciding whether Zionism can be equated with racism, it's important to determine what Zionism really is. It's the philosophy and the movement whose purpose for almost 2000 years has been to restore Zion, the ancient land of Israel to the Jewish people, as its ancestral national homeland. Through centuries of wars, devastation, exile, dispersion and persecution, Zion never ceased to be the heart of Jewish yearning and survival. It was only as Eretz Israel, as Zion, that this land entered into the historical, cultural and spiritual consciousness of the world.

■ Jews have lived in the Holy Land since Biblical times and without interruption. They are the original and the oldest settlers. But it wasn't until late in the last century that this love for Zion found expression in a political movement. It was founded by Theodor Herzl, a totally "emancipated" Austrian Jew, a playwright and journalist. His intellect, vision and energy, his personal magnetism and organizational talents gave expression and action to the age-old Jewish longing for Zion. Modern political Zionism was born. The ingathering of the children of Israel into their ancestral homeland had begun.

■ Sparked by their ancient yearning and by Herzl's vision, tens of thousands of European Jews left for Palestine and transformed it into what Israel is today — a land of verdant fields, lush forests, productive industries and flourishing cities.

■ How about "racism"? It is a defamation of the Jewish faith to link it with this evil concept. It is incompatible with the doctrines of Jewish civilization, enunciated over 3000 years ago in the Holy Bible, in which all mankind is traced to a single human being, created by God in His own image. The two greatest sufferers from the plague of racism have been the Blacks and the Jewish people. It's only today that this cruel yoke has been lifted from the Blacks. The fate of the Jews, as victims of racism, was even more cruel. Because wherever they lived in the Old World, it was only at the sufferance of their overlords — always subject to living in ghettos, having no access to education, being restricted to few and humiliating occupations, and always victims of persecution, murder, rape, confiscation and exile.

■ The suffering of the Jews as victims of racism reached its terrible climax during the Holocaust of the second World War, perpetrated by the German Nazi machine. The Jews of Europe were liquidated in the most horrible manner imaginable — six million of them altogether. The terms "Holocaust" and "Genocide" had to be coined to express this unprecedented disaster, this bizarre expression of hatred and racism.

■ Racism is totally contrary to Jewish philosophy and Jewish thinking. Jews have been and still are on the forefront of the fight for racial justice in the United States, in South Africa and all over the world. The state of Israel is founded on racial equality. And how could it be otherwise? Close to 60% of the population of Israel are what we would call "non-Caucasians". Can such a state be racist? The question is preposterous and the answer is obvious.

■ Israel has been and continues to be a leader in policies that attest to its "non-racism". It has pioneered a hugely effective development program in 31 Black African countries. Israel has organized similar development programs in such countries as Thailand, Burma, the Philippines and Singapore. It was among the first countries to take in Vietnamese boat people. Israel has absorbed into its society hundreds of thousands of refugees from all over the world and without any reference to their race. Among them are the Black Jews of India, Oriental Jews from all Arab countries, and most recently more than 10,000 Black Ethiopian Jews who were air-lifted to freedom in Israel, in a daring rescue operation.

The disgusting equation that "Zionism = Racism" was foisted on the General Assembly of the United Nations by the Arab nations and by the Soviet bloc. It has no basis in fact. Israel is a multi-racial society in which all races, including the resident Arabs and Druze, are treated equally, are represented in the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament), and hold important official and diplomatic positions. For instance, the Israeli Consul General in Atlanta is an Arab. Racism is totally contrary to the tenets of the Jewish religion and to the unwritten constitution of Israel. How does that compare to Israel's accusers? The Soviet bloc keeps its Jews in bondage by not allowing them to emigrate. The Arabs have for the most part expelled all Jews from their countries and don't even allow Jewish visitors. They were the slave masters of yesteryear and some are reported to practice slavery even today. They are mercilessly exploiting Black Africa and other developing countries by their inflated oil prices. For them to say that Zionism is racism is a travesty and an insult to the intelligence of the world.

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they could go there and watch."

What's immediately interesting is how many people haven't the slightest idea how to read fiction. I was taken to task by readers who, had they even a passing sophistication, would have found my story as part of a satirical tradition. What's hideous is that such readers often hold themselves to be arbiters of taste. Book and theater critics are often guilty, though they are far more culpable, of the same crime. (Reviewing is definitely a form of hate mail.) Nothing is more common than the belief that we display judgment by the unwillingness to be pleased. This quality, or lack of it, is usually conveyed in hate mail by language that takes on a sudden archness, a certain orotund and phony hauteur with a touch of funereal cadency, the kind of language cops use to seem educated and efficient when being interviewed by the news media: "I am not at liberty to divulge at this point in time . . . "

Hate mail is typically handwritten, tendentious, and ungrammatical. It is often demented. Invariably the more abusive it is, the more illiterate. It is dictatorial, outraged, never composed to receive a reply—and in this sense thus not correspondence at all. It is rarely inquisitive. (I am half Italian, in fact, and Roman Catholic myself.) Much of it is anonymous and all of it remarkably dull. Needless to say—or does this have to be said?—it is often personal. It lends itself to endless autobiography, and mind-bendingly uninformative digressions, bearing the stamp of a secret too complicated to reveal. Several of the people who wrote regarding my story about the Italian woman were utterly convinced the magazine wouldn't publish their letters. Others preferred it that way, adding significantly *Do Not Print This Letter* or *Not for Publication.*

Judging from the letters I've received, the writers are often gullible, rude, and horribly afraid of being laughed at. Many needed no other provocation than to find themselves excelled. There are minds that best (and sometimes can only) define themselves by having an opponent shouting at passing cars, talking back to television sets, etc. The thoughts and observations of another implicitly rob him of his own. The archetypal mind of the hate-mail writer is often the sterile preserve of only one or two beliefs. The imagination never takes such firm possession of the mind as when it is so preoccupied, which is to say, essentially found empty and vacant, a confused mind, easily provoked, smarting, stretched often at the breaking point.

A lonely mind is nevertheless by no means a mind hesitant to express itself. It needs to talk, and it takes exception generally in direct ratio to how often and how long it has been ignored. It is suspicious of, be-

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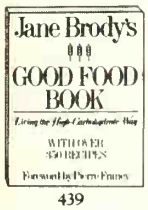

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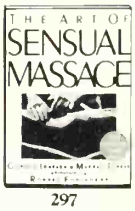

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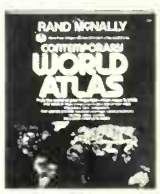

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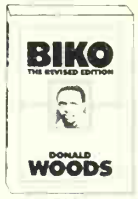

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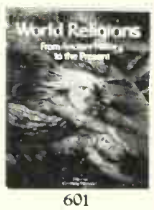

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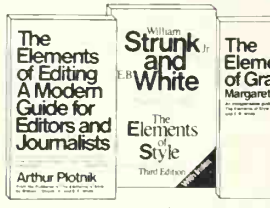

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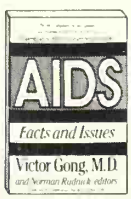

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ause powerless against, the very me-
a world to which it craves entrance
for no other reason than it is pre-
sely this world from which it is thor-
ughly convinced it has been ex-
luded.

Three main themes emerge in such
tters—angry bewilderment, accusa-
on, and old-fashioned abuse. Of the
rious kinds I've received over the
ears, the least pleasing is not neces-
rily the demand for explanation,
ut it may be the funniest. Writers
e constantly being asked, with the
nd of brutally direct question that
ecomes an accusation, if not the
eaning of something in their books,
he meaning of the very books them-
lves. The English playwright Har-
ld Pinter once received this
ve: "I would be much obliged if you
ould kindly explain to me the
eaning of your play, *The Birthday
rty*. These are the points which I
o not understand: 1. Who are the
wo men? 2. Where did Stanley come
from? 3. Were they all supposed to be normal? You will appreciate that without the answers to these questions I cannot fully understand your play."

Pinter replied: "Dear Madam: I would be obliged if you would kindly explain to me the meaning of your letter. These are the points which I do not understand: 1. Who are you? 2. Where do you come from? 3. Are you supposed to be normal? You will appreciate that without the answers to my questions I cannot fully understand your letter."

The most curious characteristic of hate mail is that it makes the very accusations and charges (often repeating the same words) that angry lovers down the years have commonly used against each other—concern for the surface of things, the use of misunderstanding and misrepresentation as weapons of debate, the fondness for directionless discussion, the preemption of the major share of feeling, the exaggerated estimate of his or her own plausibility, and the certainty that a view is the more credible and useful for the fact that someone, in particular, holds it. Lonely people write hate letters. Lonely people also write love letters. (I've received several marriage proposals in the mail.) There's something weirdly shared in both approaches, a cry for attention. Notice me!

I believe, finally, that the urge to write hate mail is strong in all of us. There is an uncommon need to let the angry little monkey out of one's heart, especially considering the plentitude of mediocrities growing up around us. I've sustained the urge myself many times. Thankfully it passes. I don't suppose it makes much difference. There is something advantageous in being attacked as well as praised. "Fame is a shuttlecock," wrote Dr. Sam Johnson. "If it be struck only at one end of the room, it will soon fall to the ground." ■

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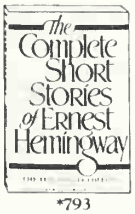

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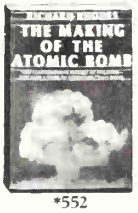

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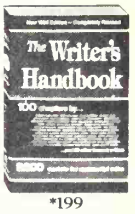

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For more information about the program, the visiting writers, and financial aid (our teaching fellows conduct undergraduate creative writing classes) write to: Director, Creative Writing Program, Department of English, Boston University, 236 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215. The deadline for Fall '88 applications is March 15, 1988.

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LETTERS

Continued from page 5

screams of humanity for someone to take up *our* cause.

Antonina Bruno
Poway, Calif.

Sallie Tisdale's essay provides a sense of what happens to the absolute when it is tempered by the contextual. It suggests what Rilke refers to as being "on scaffoldings, alone with one's consciousness." Explaining why she calls them girls (a feminist heresy) rather than women, Tisdale writes, "They come so young, snapping gum, sockless and sneakered, and their shakily applied eyeliner smears when they cry. I call them girls with maternal benignity. I cannot imagine them as mothers."

We catch a glimpse of the gender subculture. All the presidents, patriarchs, priests, prelates, and impregnators are off camera. We see, starkly, the absence of responsibility by fathers (if there is a paternal instinct, it is not evident here). In a way, these are virgin births, both because of the ignorance and the aloneness of the gestation. The pundits concerned with the life of the fetus ignore the plight of the inadvertent materfamilias, even when she is a victim.

But Tisdale does not deal with the complicity of the powerful. She deals with the world as it comes to her, yet imagines a world where this won't be necessary. Perhaps she would find these words of Cocteau appropriate: "The eyes of the dead must be closed gently, and so, too, must the eyes of the living be opened."

Nancy Reeves
San Diego, Calif.

Gay Fictions

Christopher Hitchens's description [Washington Letter, "It Dare Not Speak Its Name," *Harper's Magazine*, August 1987] of my recent controversy with the *Washington Post* over an article it published about my deceased brother deprives your readers of essential facts. Those facts—which other

ublications saw fit to include in their ccounts—are: 1. My criticism of the *Vashington Post* focused not, as Hitıens claims on homosexual issues ıt on the ethics of *Post* editors. 2. he editors broke their word (given peatedly) and refused to hear the cts about my brother's life and eath. 3. They ran a story whose vecity they knew had been challenged ıt refused to hear that challenge or ll their readers about it. 4. The story n because it advanced the views and eology of the *Post* leadership on the y-rights issue and because *Post* perınnel, especially managing editor en Downie, had gotten very brave, ter my brother was dead, about eveng the score with the *Post*'s most efctive conservative critics.

Hitchens can, if he pleases, leave l this out. But even *Harper's* editors ould draw the line at the blatantly ıethical. Hitchens attributes quotes ch as "homosexual intrigue" at the)st and "poor Ben Bradlee has no ıe on whom he dares turn his back" my essay. Indeed, these quotes apear in one of Hitchens's opening sennces and are critical to the burden of s piece. But where do they come)m? Did he make them up or yank em from somewhere else? In any se, your readers should know I dn't write or utter them.

nthony R. Dolan
lexandria, Va.

hristopher Hitchens replies:

This letter is wrongly addressed. nthony Dolan very well knows the ovenance of the quotations. The g about Ben Bradlee and the line out "homosexual intrigue" were ken directly from the *Washington imes* sidebar to his piece. If he wishes disown them, he should complain his Moonie editors, which I happen know he has not done.

Dolan wrote, to quote him further, the "pro-gay, anti-conservative as of the *Washington Post*, including at of its editor, Ben Bradlee." He leged that Bradlee was afraid of beg thought soft on the gay issue by his anaging editor and possible succesr, Len Downie.

The rest of his letter likewise adheres to the standard of veracity upheld by the President to whom Dolan acts as speechwriter.

Test Tube Ideology

Scientists don't just happen upon technologies, as suggested in "Ethics in Embryo" [Forum, *Harper's Magazine*, September 1987]. They are not "discovered" as one finds loose change behind the sofa cushion while cleaning. A determined *search* is made for these technologies.

The question you should be asking is not what do we do with these discoveries, but rather why are we choosing these directions to search for them.

Why are we increasingly looking at pregnancy as a production process, resulting in either valuable commodities (screened, quality-controlled, gender-selected babies) or "waste products," as Lewis Lapham termed the fetuses discarded after abortions.

The commodification of embryos, fetuses, and children has profoundly negative consequences. It *hurts* people. Salk refers to the damage done to the mother-child relationship when he says that complications during pregnancy, labor, and delivery seem to increase the likelihood of adolescent suicide. But does he see this damage as a consequence of the interruption of a social relationship; does he see it in terms of the damage done to the woman as a mother as a result of the management of these complications in medical settings? No, he turns to the harshest eugenics language, and concludes, "Now that we can save more babies, we might be, in a sense, tampering with nature's quality control."

The technology we develop is a product of the kind of society we are. With a belief in genetic determinism, a belief in the value-neutrality of scientific research, and with an abiding concern for the economic bottom line, we "discover" new reproductive technology. It is our ideology that we must examine, not simply our technology.

Barbara Katz Rothman
City University of New York
New York City

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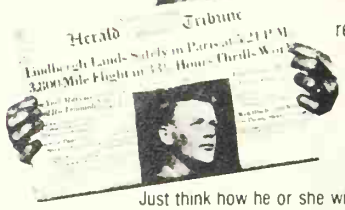

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Go and Sin Some More

The ad campaigns for the seven deadly sins [Forum, *Harper's Magazine*, November 1987] has been nominated for my personal "Year's Best" award. It is an excellent if not superior collection of cardinal vices.

I should cancel my subscription—on the grounds that *Harper's* will never be any better and no one needs second best; however, my sloth will prevail.

Thank you for your time and may the Lord bless you this day and always.

The Reverend Jerome Bates Stretch
Manchester, N.H.

January Index Sources

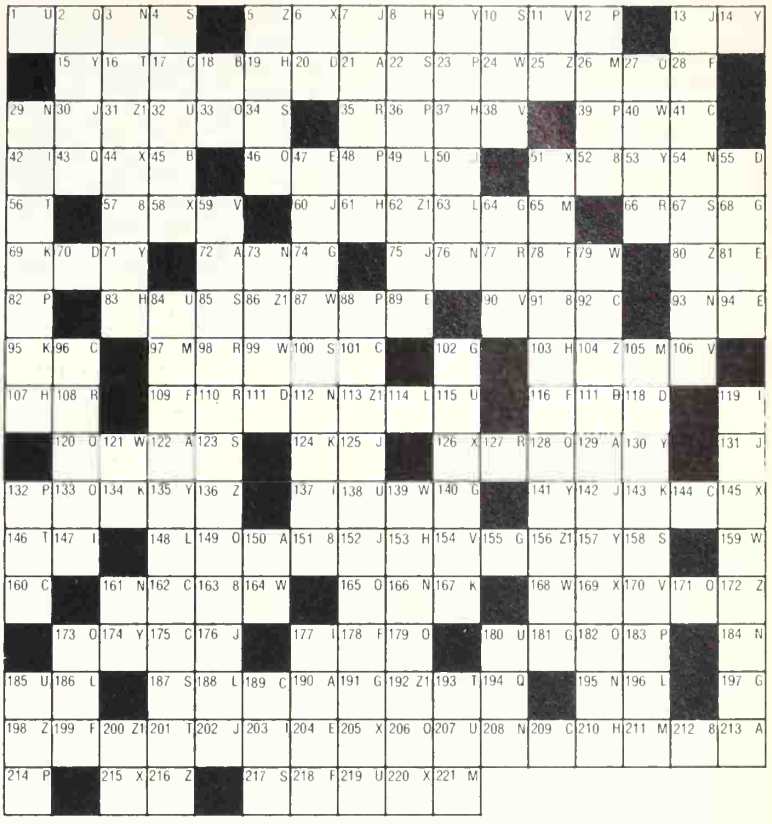
1,2 U.S. Office of Management and Budget; **3** Joint Committee on Taxation (Washington, D.C.); **4** U.S. Internal Revenue Service; **5** Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Stockholm); **6** Patterson Dental Supply (Minneapolis, Minn.); **7** Associated Press (N.Y.C.); **8** World Bank (Washington, D.C.); **9** U.S. Dept. of Agriculture; **10,11** *Newsday* (Melville, N.Y.); **12,13** U.S. Census Bureau; **14,15** U.S. Civil Rights Commission; **16** *Persecución a la Iglesia en Chile*, by Jaime Escobar (Editores South America, Santiago, Chile); **17** Arms Control and Foreign Policy Caucus (Washington, D.C.); **18** U.S. Dept. of State; **19** U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service; **20** Los Angeles Unified School District; **21** Central Bureau of Statistics (Jerusalem); **22,23** *Espresso* (Rome); **24** American Fertility Society (Birmingham, Ala.); **25** Harris Poll (N.Y.C.); **26** U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration; **27** International Cheerleading Foundation (Shawnee-Mission, Kan.); **28,29** National Collegiate Athletic Association (Mission, Kan.); **30** Dr. Ralph Hingson, School of Public Health, Boston University; **31** Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (N.Y.C.); **32,33** *Parade* (N.Y.C.); **34** Packaged Facts (N.Y.C.); **35** Fox, Inc. (Los Angeles); **36** Waterbed Manufacturers Association (Los Angeles); **37** U.S. Census Bureau; **38** Greenwich City Hall/Connecticut Real Estate Commission (Hartford); **39** U.S. Geological Survey (Reston, Va.)/NORSK Polar Institute (Oslo)/U.S. Coast Guard International Ice Patrol (Groton, Conn.); **40** Charles Knight, National Center for Atmospheric Research (Boulder, Colo.).

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 61

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 79.



CLUES

A. Uttered; declaimed — 129 213 21 190 72 / 122 150

B. Alkaloid obtained from the bark of a tropical African tree — 45 18 91 212 52 / 57 151 117 163

C. Stunner of the Amazon (2 wds.) — 96 175 92 17 144 / 41 160 162 101 209 189

D. Diggory Venn's trade (Hardy, *The Return of the Native*) — 55 70 179 118 111 33 20 206 / 149

E. Fillet for the hair — 204 81 47 94 89

F. Type of large kerchief — 109 199 78 28 218 178 116

G. Fungus of the genus Geaster — 64 181 191 197 140 74 155 102 / 68

H. 1947 Carol Reed film (3 wds.) — 37 83 103 19 210 153 107 61 / 8

I. River forming part of the Indiana-Illinois border — 137 177 203 119 147 42

J. Not developing full potential of; not satisfying — 202 7 131 30 60 125 142 75 / 176 13 50 152

K. Bombed, stoned, smashed, fried, boiled — 134 143 124 95 167 69

L. Form; pattern; vogue; make — 196 49 186 63 148 188 114

M. Impending evil; source of danger — 211 221 65 105 97 26

N. Snake-lover — 112 3 184 54 195 93 166 76 / 29 73 161 208

O. Expressed in words — 182 27 46 173 171 133

P. Combined, mingled — 23 214 39 88 36 48 132 12 / 183 82

Q. Based; cheered — 128 2 43 165 194 120

R. Dog it; loaf; goldbrick (2 wds.) — 66 110 127 108 77 35 98

S. Unconcerned; mediocre; apathetic — 85 22 187 67 10 217 100 34 / 4 158 123

T. Bond; tie; link — 193 56 16 146 201

U. Sister of Electra and Orestes — 219 1 32 138 180 84 207 185 / 115

V. Try — 154 106 90 11 38 170 59

W. Sec, half a mo', jiffy — 164 40 87 168 79 99 121 139 / 24 159

X. Scruffy, shabby (3 wds.) — 6 58 205 169 220 51 44 215 / 145 126

Y. Sophoclean tragedy (2 wds.) — 157 15 71 9 53 174 130 141 / 135 14

Z. Cutter and engraver of precious stones — 172 25 5 104 136 80 198 210

Z1. Apt; appropriate; suitable — 86 156 62 31 192 200 113

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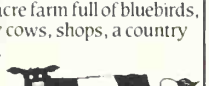

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I	P	E	T	S	T	O	T	I	N	K	A	
I	N	D	E	P	E	N	D	E	N	C	E	

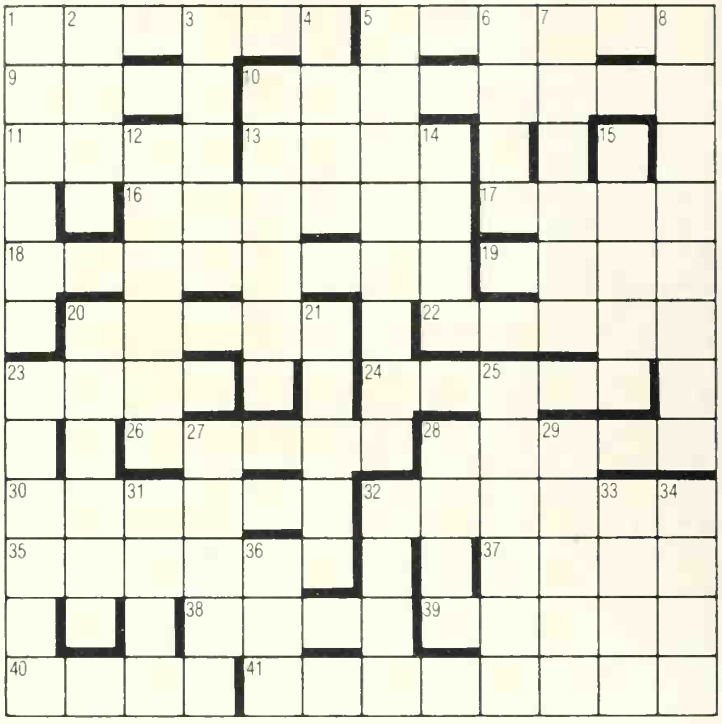
NOTES FOR "VARIATIONS OF A YULETIDE THEME"

ACROSS: 8. EA-TABLE'S, & Lit; 12. M(I'M-E)R; 13. (w)ARMED; 14. E-LICIT-S; 15. (k)(R)ENO; 16. EG-OISTS (anagram); 17. CANT, two meanings; 22. EYRE, hidden; 23. INFRA-CT; 27. ARCHEST, hidden; 28. WE(FT)S, reversal of SEW; 30. RAKI, hidden; 31. S(TO)TINK-A. DOWN: 1. PELAGE, hidden; 2. ITEM, hidden; 3. L-ACELIKE (anagram); 4. RE-CLUSE(anagram); 5. O-NICE; 6. NOMI(N)AL, anagram; 7. CORSETS, anagram; 9. SMIR(reversal)-CH; 10. DRUG, two meanings; 11. AD(D)S; 18. DENARI(anagram)-I; 19. C-ROCKED; 20. TONERS, anagram; 21. HIRSUTE, "her suit"; 24. NO-(TI-ON, reversal); 25. TEST-A-E(poxy); 26. TRAP, reversal; 29. FINN, "fin".

SOLUTION TO DECEMBER DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 60). MAURICE ISSERMAN: IF I HAD A HAMMER. Thousands of those accused of Communist . . . sympathies were fired from jobs in government, the universities, public schools, and private industry. New York State made its own contribution to national security by denying Communists the privilege of purchasing fishing licenses.

CONTEST RULES: Send the quotation, the name of the author, and the title of the work, together with your name and address, to Double Acrostic No. 61, *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's Magazine*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by January 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. The solution will be printed in the February issue. Winners of Double Acrostic No. 59 (November) are Helen Graves, New York City; Gary Green, Englewood, Colorado; and Randy Welty, Leucadia, California.

PUZZLE



Decipherment

by E.R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

Each clue includes a definition of the "light" (diagram entry) as usual, but the cryptic portion of the clue describes the light in its deciphered form.

Six lights are capitalized words, 20D and 27D are uncommon, 10D is a variant spelling, and 5D is a common phrase. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 79.

Across

1. A bit of beer (light) before church is an unsightly thing (6)
5. Written material put out by public relations! (6)
9. Unknown numbers like the swamps (4)
10. Express impatience with horsepower when doubling back (8, *hyphenated*)
11. Medicine man's reputation (4)
13. Sneakily steal from front of reception lines (4)
16. One risk of casual sex . . . it's witchcraft (6)
17. Load weights the wrong way (4)
18. Roosevelt left records for pieces of baggage? (8)
19. Open land—the sign of a gentleman? (4)
20. Black player's first Texas leaguer (5)
22. Scout's master explosive (5)
23. Captured retreating knight (4)
24. Illustriously take the lead from Nellie Bly (5)
26. Second test level (5)
28. Cup size (small) could be applicable to this! (5)
30. Detroit must win without us (and that includes I) (6)
32. Drunk takes sandwich with a side of toast (6)
35. NBC is upset about Denver's end and Elway, e.g. (6)
37. Mark well returning blessing (4)
38. Democrat's doubly an old fogy (4)
39. Like a forest that's died in Wyoming (5)
40. Too wise, one hears, to shift position at random (4, *hyphenated*)
41. Rabbi (Doctor of Theology) with cross . . . obviously not Reformed (8)

Down

1. Some Pabst surely raises the spirits (6)
2. Polish city left with empty demilitarized zone (4)
3. Try out yodel ultimately here! (5)
4. Heavy-duty covering (4)
5. Game horse? Pressure normal within twist (8, *two words*)
6. Takes the choice parts (4)
7. Harrison's VP does number on A-Team member (6)
8. Place for display is quiet and warm after adult leaves (8)
10. Republican left during movie, rating an introductory speech (6)
12. Very large subject: decorative moldings (6)
14. One of the invasion force is missing (4)
15. Black as ink from pen (5)
20. Kind of British gun French used in extremes of battles (6)
21. Dirty movie . . . e.g., opening of *Practical Nurse* (5)
23. She's pretty manly, mountain-climbing off the main route (6)
25. Mistake made by big shot? Hardly! (6, *hyphenated*)
27. Train 500 painting in a circle (5)
28. Lady in black and white muff (4)
29. Return of boozer's problem is bore (5)
31. Pitcher's tense times (4)
32. Abruptly discharge half of debt (4)
33. Commotion created by six at football game? (4, *hyphenated*)
34. Minor gem from *New York Times* (4)
36. Speak of love, approximately (3)

Contest Rules: Send completed diagram with name and address to "Decipherment," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's Magazine*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. Winners' names will be printed in the March issue. Winners of the November puzzle, "Jigsaw," are Taliaferro Boatwright, Stonington, Connecticut; Carlton E. Currie, Santa Nella, California; and Raymond Sehrman, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

February

FEBRUARY 1988

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FOUNDED IN 1850 / VOL. 276, NO. 1653
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LETTERS

Banana Defense

Robert Moore, president of the International Banana Association [Readings, "Standing Up for the Banana," December 1987], argues that associating the banana with the human penis is "unsavory" and damaging to the industry. Penises United Defense Society (PUDS) was formed to fight such effete prejudice. In our opinion the penis is the most noble organ that God ever bestowed upon man or woman. Most of the over one hundred million members we represent agree. If Moore and his bananas are too good for the penis, we suggest they give theirs up.

N. D. Smith
Austin, Tex.

As an artist, a poet, and a banana fan, I resent Robert Moore's attempt to appropriate for his own uses a fruit that has possessed a rich heritage of sexual connotations long before he or the International Banana Association were on this earth.

In case you have forgotten, Robert Moore, the banana is much more than "an important product." You and your group may own some banana plants, but you do not own the *idea* of a banana. You do not own its particular shape, size, texture, or color. And you most certainly have no claims upon the metaphors, verbal and visual, that have arisen from the banana. These are part of our shared language, and they enrich it and us.

What is truly offensive is the "unsavory association" *you* have drawn from the similarities between a banana and a penis. The resemblance exists; it is inherently humorous, as most children have noticed; and you have no legal right (or any other) to squelch, censor, or control it.

You ought to be proud that PBS chose a banana to demonstrate the use of a condom. *That* banana may save lives, which is probably more than you—the self-appointed guardian of banana etiquette—are doing.

Lay off your legalese and get off your high horse. The banana is a wonderful, funny fruit, and it deserves a better spokesperson. Go sell inanimate props, for heaven's sake.

Colleen Anderson
Charleston, W. Va.

Harper's Magazine welcomes Letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters are subject to editing. Letters must be typed double-spaced; volume precludes individual acknowledgment.

No Fancy Puppies

I feel neglected by your December 1987 issue. In the beginning of the magazine, Dave Barry [Readings, "Miami to New York: Drop Dead"] describes his brief New York encounter of the scummy kind. Toward the end, Peter Freundlich [Miscellany, "Gazing into Bergdorf's Window"] elaborates on yuppies obsessed with fancy puppies and gilded faucets in $3,000-a-month apartments.

What about me? I looked and looked for some mention of me and my kind. You know, the New Yorker who yields his seat to old ladies in subways and gives directions to wayward

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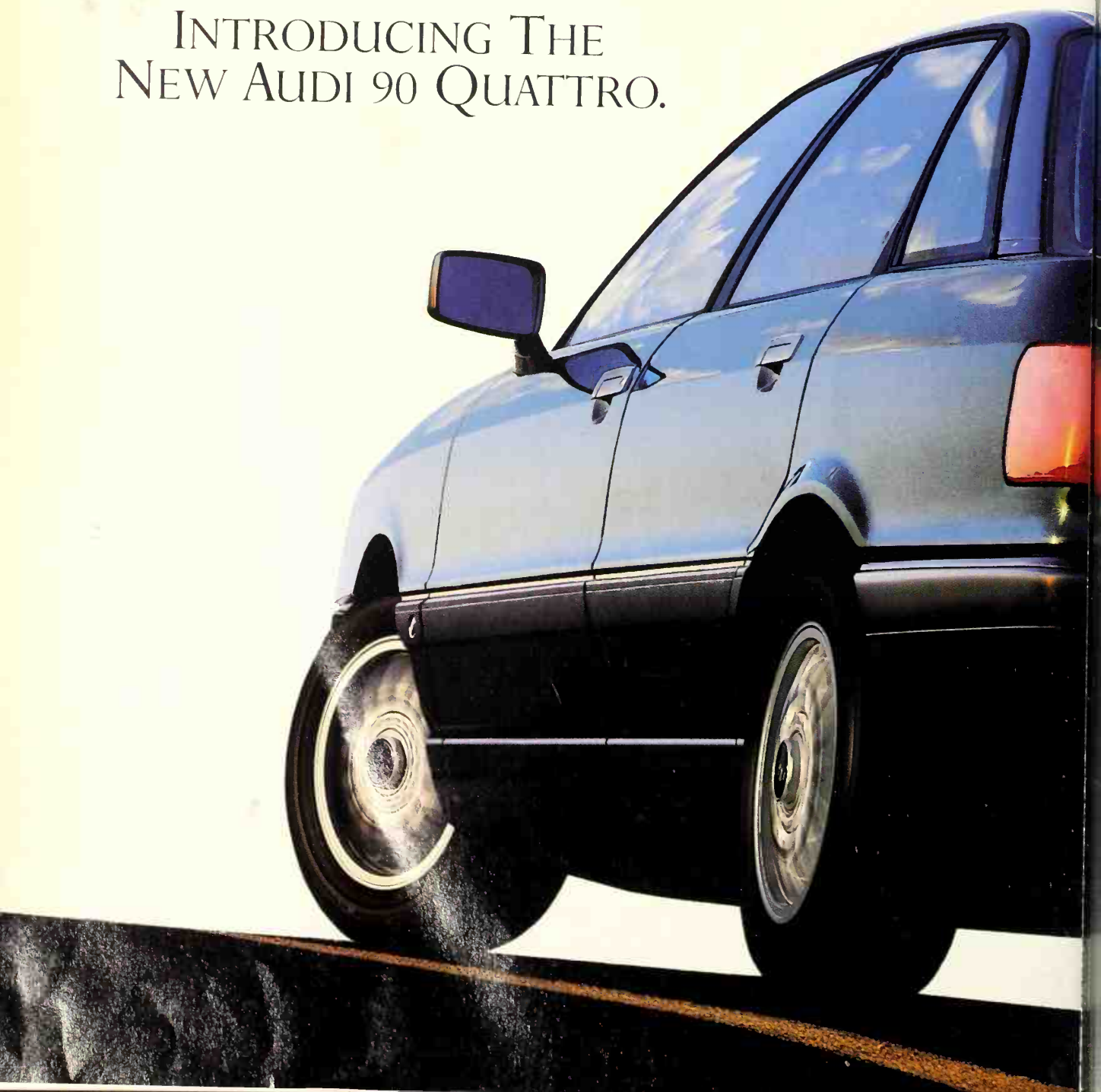

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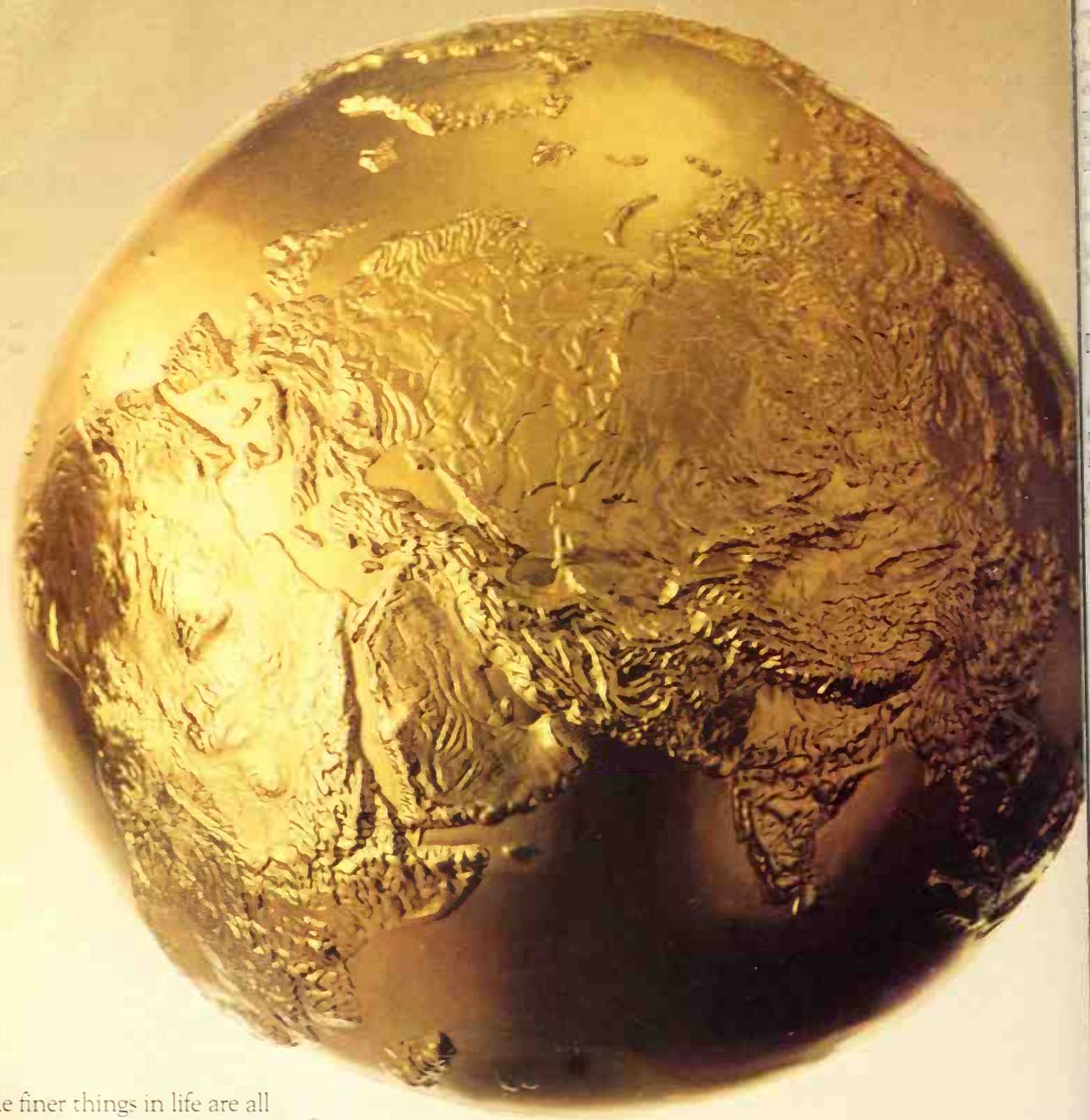

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foreigners, who lives in a decently priced apartment, who prefers romaine to radicchio, and who takes advantage of the multitude of free events in New York.

But my search for at least a nod to the vast majority of Manhattanites who connect the two ends of the spectrum represented in the December *Harper's Magazine* was for nought. Left out of the limelight again. If I had a shrink, I guess I'd have to take this issue up with him.

M. *Abrams*
New York City

Diagrammatical Mistake

I am a sophomore in a high school located in the foothills of the Sierra mountains. Several days ago, my English teacher referred to the "ultimate diagraming" challenge [Readings, "Parse One for the Gipper," July 1987]. The sentence in question was a long, rambling statement President Reagan made during a press conference concerning the Iran-*contra* affair. You published a diagram of that sentence. Here's the problem. My class thinks your diagram is incorrect. Enclosed is our version.

Our teacher suggests that we call for a presidential commission to investigate the state of diagraming skills among editors of national magazines. We feel his demand is a bit outlandish but would appreciate your review of our work.

Ollie Phillips
Colfax, Calif.

Changing the Channel

Jack Hitt's Annotation ["And Now, for Something Completely Cheap," November 1987] got one thing right. Public television is underfunded.

But knocking public television for "foreign imports" is an old and misleading ploy. Hitt misses a far more interesting story: public television today is increasingly a *global* business. The enormous expense of major series is increasingly borne by co-productions in which the editorial role is shared.

Limited dollars do not necessarily mean a lack of innovation, and the evidence is right there on the same schedule grid. PBS can't risk a joke? What about *Trying Times*, our new comedy series? Nothing truly original? What about *Ring of Truth*, a series on the scientific method? Or *Alive From Off Center*, a showcase for experimental video? Or Bill Moyers on the Iran-*contra* hearings? Or *Showdown on Tobacco Road*, a documentary about the pro- and anti-smoking forces?

Hitt says "What C-SPAN does for Congress, PBS does for culture." Is that a bad thing, when tickets cost up to $50 each? PBS lets millions into the nation's best concert halls and theaters for free. And PBS has been a catalyst for culture: series such as *Great Performances* and *American Playhouse* have prompted hundreds of new productions.

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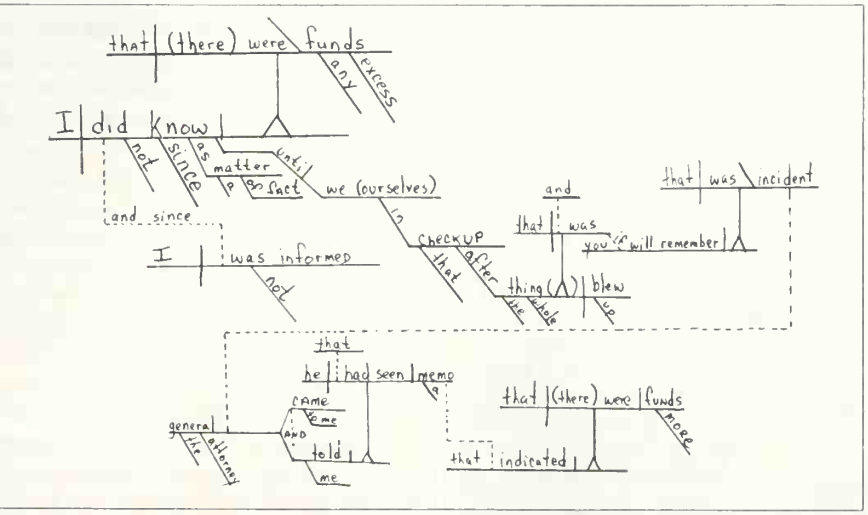

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reward in our schedule. The miracle is that we can do so much for so little, at a fraction of the cost of the commercial networks. Frugal, yes. Cheap, no.

Mary Jane McKinven
Washington, D.C.

Mary Jane McKinven is the corporate information director of the Public Broadcasting Service.

After reading Jack Hitt's Annotation, I can only be grateful that the practices he describes are confined to public television.

Consider an analogous situation in magazine publishing. A national periodical finds itself in a financial bind and must limit its funding of investigative articles. It decides to adopt a format composed largely of brief articles, stories, and miscellany gleaned from transcripts of informal symposia, annotations of public documents, and reprocessed lists of readily accessible facts.

What a failure of creativity! Who would ever read such a magazine?

Jack D. Neefus
University Park, Md.

German Memories

While reading your Berlin Letter ["Where Money Has Little Currency," by Hans Koning, November 1987], I wondered whether the author had toured the same East German countryside and its capital that I know well from living seventeen years in West Berlin.

It is naive to believe that East Germans enter a university by examination and freely choose their careers. East German students undergo systematic screening to place them in specialized schools, thus minimizing job selection. (This screening accounts for East Germany's many sports achievements.) A person who deviates from the policies of the ruling Communist party can cancel all ambitions for employment in an influential or respectable position.

Koning describes Unter den Linden as one of Europe's finest shopping streets. But it is not comparable to Oxford Street in London, the

Champs Elysées in Paris, or Kurfuerstendamm in West Berlin. Perhaps Unter den Linden is glamorous in a nation in which toilet paper is scarce and the waiting list for a low-quality domestic car can be ten years.

Koning portrays West Germany as an anti-American country that continues to think within the closed-minded dimensions of Nazi Germany, while *only* the East celebrates Hitler's defeat. Obviously, East Germany celebrates Hitler's defeat because it seeks to justify its Communist dictatorship as well as please the 100,000 Soviet soldiers that played a decisive role in destroying Nazi Germany and currently occupy the country.

In high school in West Berlin, I was taught every year about the rise of Hitler and his terrible crimes. My classmates and I were shocked by the destruction that Germans wrought in Europe and the crimes they committed in concentration camps, crimes for which no excuse or justification exists. I marched with tens of thousands of Germans in West Berlin on May 8, 1985, to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the war's end and I listened to Jesse Jackson speak. Contrary to Koning's belief, we were *celebrating* defeat and gratefully embracing democracy, while East Germany is experiencing the tragic fate of having exchanged one dictatorship for another.

Rafael Apélian
Nashville

New Age Sin

I was doing my eighty-two-year-old shuffle down the city street while pondering your article on the seven deadly sins [Forum, November 1987]. Suddenly a lady piped up, "God bless you, sir!" and handed me a pamphlet. Her tone was so tender and solicitous I felt I was receiving supreme unction. The pamphlet asked: "How are things between you and God? . . . Everyone knows death brings you with him."

Not that I am worried about the seven deadly sins. They have become virtues, as your article suggests. Lust is America's favorite indoor sport. Gluttony can be seen in the national passion for fancy recipes and high-priced

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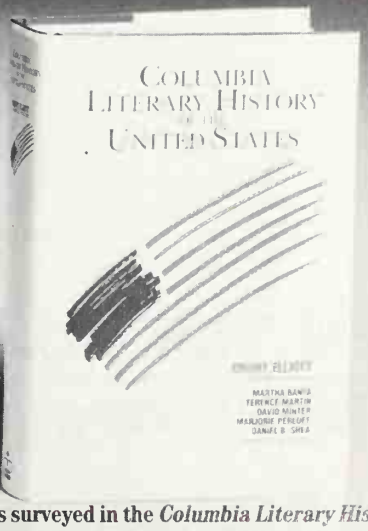

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restaurants. Sloth is celebrated in fashionable magazines in the guise of leisure, recreation, and entertainment. Pride abounds in names such as black pride, gay pride, and lesbian pride. Wrath is the great virtue of revolutionaries and reformers. Envy, as Bertrand Russell said, is the basis of democracy. And avarice keeps our stock markets humming.

In the old days, punishment was essential for sin, yet the idea of punishment seems as obsolete as sin itself. One prominent clergyman has said that people are more afraid of losing their jobs than they are of going to hell.

With hell going out of business as well as God, brotherly love, faith, hope, charity, and eternal life, how can the church and state make people toe the mark?

I think there has been a consolidation of ecclesiastical, civil, and criminal law. Our courts dispense both moral and common law: the law has taken on a religious, almost sacred, character, making a violation of the Civil Rights Act both a crime and a sin.

This leaves the sinner in a dilemma. If repentant, to whom or what does he turn for absolution?

Albert B. Dahlquist
Mundelain, Ill.

A Few Good Faces

I was disappointed to see Bill Burke's photographs of two soldiers in the Readings section of your November issue. *Harper's Magazine* is usually more sensitive to the effects of pictures. I will not reiterate Susan Sontag's observations on the exploitation of non-famous people asked to pose for the camera but will remark only on the political implications of such portraits.

Burke's motivation may be to humanize the Khmer Rouge fighters. Giving faces to the enemy should awaken our compassion and justify our longings for peace. But by presenting them as proud young men eager to please, Burke expresses the same romantic fascination with soldiers that has made it possible to send our hoodwinked sons to war through the millennia.

You should have added a caption: *The Khmer Rouge Needs a Few Good Men.*

Katherine Meyer
Foster, R.I.

Canny Cupcakes

"What the hell happened to my town?" asks Richard Rhodes [Essay, "Cupcake Land," November 1987]. Actually, it put on a disguise hoping that Richard would just go away, taking his vinegarish tongue and huffish self-esteem to a far distant clime. Nobody in *any* town could stomach an extended exposure to a plethoric bore who mistakes ridicule for savvy. When Richard leaves, the canny folk will come out of hiding. Incidentally, I will be sure to avoid his book on the atomic bomb; it probably advocates the destruction of the whole inferior human race.

Ruth Slickman
Easton, Kan.

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NOTEBOOK

A wish for kings

By Lewis H. Lapham

ncompetent armies deify the com-ander.

—Prussian maxim

While watching last summer's earings before the Iran-*contra* com-ittees, and again in the late autumn hile reading the text of the congres-onal report, I kept expecting to ear somebody say something—not udly, of course, and maybe only rough a handkerchief, but at least mething—about our slave's faith secret wars. Surely, I thought, ere was a chance to renounce both he theory and practice of covert ac-on. About the practice, the politi-ans were often critical, a few of hem permitting themselves an occa-onally acerbic remark about the lundering dishonesty of Attorney General Edwin Meese and Vice Adm. John Poindexter. But on the oint of doctrine the committees re-ained as silent as a colony of Christmas mice. Not once during the ntire three months of testimony, or roughout the whole 690 pages of he published narrative, did any-ody—not a single congressman, awyer, or witness—utter so much as single word against the fatuous and ynical belief that the cause of liberty an be made to stand on the pedestal f criminal violence.

A few members of the committees orried about what they called "the aradox" or "the contradictions" im-licit in the waging of clandestine arfare under the jurisdiction of "a ree, open, and democratic society." A few other members expressed the orlorn hope that covert actions ight be limited in size and cost, or ndertaken only with the written ermission of the Congress. But in nswer to any and all direct questions bout the need to deal manfully with vents not always to one's liking, all present bowed their heads and murmured in solemn unison, saying, in effect: "Yes, it is a very, very dangerous world, heavily populated with all sorts of dangerous enemies armed with all sorts of dangerous weapons, and in order to defend ourselves against threats of infinite number we have no choice but to resort—reluctantly, of course, and ever mindful of the temporary damage to our constitutional principles—to murder."

Nobody ever failed to reaffirm his faith in this doctrine despite its proven stupidity. Asked to swear fealty to what amounted to Clint Eastwood's theory of diplomacy, the committees knelt and prayed.

So did the chorus of attending journalists and the choir of once and future statesmen. The editorials in the larger papers regretted the loss of the nation's innocence, but they reminded their readers that it was no good pretending that the world is a big, blue sandbox. Two former secretaries of state—Henry Kissinger and Gen. Alexander Haig—appeared on all three television networks to assure their audiences that secret operations were not only wonderfully effective but also, if properly conducted (i.e., by gentlemen as accomplished as themselves), entirely in keeping with the principles of Thomas Jefferson.

And yet, if somebody were to draw up a balance sheet reflecting the consequences of the covert actions we have let loose in the world over the last forty years, I expect that even a Pentagon accountant might concede the bankruptcy of the enterprise. Consistently and without noteworthy exception, the use of covert military action in support of American foreign policy has ended in failure or catastrophe. Whenever the United States embarks on one of those splendid little adventures so dear to the hearts of the would-be Machiavels in the White House or on the National Security Council, the patrol boats sink and the wrong tyrant seizes the palace and the radio station.

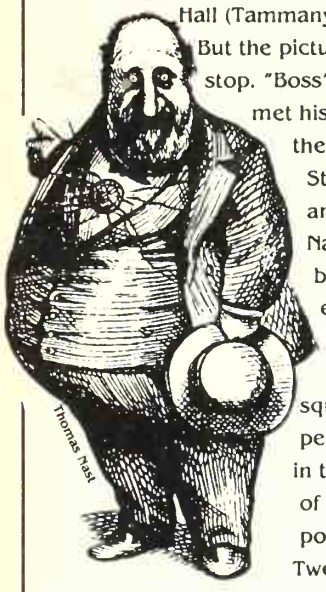
Unless the country stands willing to transform itself into a totalitarian state, even the theory of secret war is absurd. When mounted on any sort of large scale or extended over a period of more than two weeks, covert actions hide nothing from anybody except the people paying the bills. The Iran-*contra* hearings made it plain enough that the arms-for-hostages deals were known to several foreign governments (Israel, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Brunei, and Countries 8–16) as well as to an impressive crowd of Swiss bankers, Washington clerks, and Lebanese arms merchants.

Nor do the American operatives have much talent for covert action. The historical record is embarrassingly clear on the point. In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, the earliest prototype of the CIA, under the direction of Allen Dulles (a.k.a. "The Great White Case Officer"), enjoyed a brief moment of triumph in a world still largely in ruins, at a time when the military and economic supremacy of the United States went unquestioned by German waiters, and when it was possible to hire native gun-bearers for the price of a bar of chocolate and a pair of nylon stockings. The American intelligence services placed a number of agents behind Communist lines in Europe; recruited émigré armies to recapture the lost kingdoms of Poland, Bulgaria, and the Ukraine; and assisted with the removal of governments thought to be subversive in Iran (1953), Guatemala (1954), and the Philippines (1953).

Within a very few years the victories proved to be illusory or, at best, ambiguous. Advance scouts for the

"STOP THEM DAMN PICTURES"

That's what "Boss" Tweed demanded when he saw the handwriting on the Hall (Tammany, that is). But the pictures didn't stop. "Boss" Tweed met his maker in the Ludlow Street Jail and Thomas Nast put bitingly eloquent political cartoons squarely and permanently in the middle of American political life. Tweed aside, we think Emerson had it right when he said, *"Caricatures are often the truest history of the times."*



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émigré armies parachuted into the Slavic darkness and were never seen or heard from again. By overthrowing a popular but socialist regime in Iran (at the behest of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company), the United States opened the way to the vanity and ignorance of the Shah of Shahs (who had trouble speaking Farsi), to the quadrupling of the Arab oil price, the revolutionary zeal of the Ayatollah Khomeini, and the current impasse in the Persian Gulf.

The forced departure of Jacobo Arbenz from Guatemala (because his form of democratic socialism offended the United Fruit Company) allowed for the arrival of a notably vicious military junta, and in the Philippines the outfitting of Ramón Magsaysay with anti-Communist propaganda served as prelude to the corrupt regime of Ferdinand Marcos.

By the end of the decade, the American variations on themes of subversion had acquired the character of grotesque farce. With the hope of eliminating Achmed Sukarno as the president of Indonesia (because he permitted Communists to take their elected posts in his government), the CIA in 1957 armed a cadre of restless Sumatran colonels and engaged a Hollywood film crew to produce a pornographic film. Entitled *Happy Days*, the film purportedly showed Sukarno (played by a Mexican actor wearing a mask) in bed with a Soviet agent (played by a California waitress wearing a wig). The coup d'état failed, and the film was understood as a joke.

In 1961 the bungled invasion at the Bay of Pigs (a.k.a. "the glorious march through Havana") ensured Fidel Castro's communist authority throughout Latin America. The subsequent attempts to assassinate him (at least five by the CIA's hired agents) quite possibly resulted in the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

By encouraging the assassination of Ngo Dinh Diem in Saigon in 1963, the United States allied itself with a policy of realpolitik no less cynical than the one against which it was supposedly defending the principles of justice. Four American presidents defined the expedition in Vietnam as a prolonged covert action and systematically lied to the American people as to the reason for our presence in a country with which we never declared ourselves at war. As a result of our effort to rid Indochina of Communism, Vietnam became a unified Communist state. As a result of our effort to teach the world the lessons of democracy, we taught a generation of American citizens to think of their own government as an oriental despotism.

The discovery of the CIA's mining of the Nicaraguan harbors in 1983 obliterated the precarious advantage that the *contras* (on whose behalf the mines were placed) so desperately needed in the American Congress. Similarly discordant effects have followed our interventions in Cambodia, Angola, and Laos.

So unequivocal a record of stupidity and failure begs the question as to why American officialdom persists in its idiot dream of invisible war. It isn't for lack of sound advice. The late Chip Bohlen, one of the wisest of American diplomats and once ambassador to Moscow, understood in the early 1950s that covert actions always take place at the not-very-important margins of not-very-important events. In 1961 President Dwight Eisenhower's Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities reviewed the CIA's reputedly glorious record and was unable to conclude that "on balance, all of the covert action programs undertaken by the CIA up to this time have been worth the risk or the great expenditure of manpower, money, and other resources involved."

In the early years of the nineteenth century, John Quincy Adams took up the question of covert action and thought that America should send "her benedictions, and her prayers . . . wherever the standard of freedom and independence has been or shall be unfurled." But America doesn't send arms and munitions because "she goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy."

Were America to embark on such a foolish adventure, Adams said, she would become entangled "beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition,

vhich assume the colors and usurp he standard of freedom. The funda- nental maxim of [America's] policy vould insensibly change from *liberty* o *force*. . . . She might become the ictatress of the world. She would no onger be the ruler of her own spirit."

Arthur Schlesinger Jr. quotes Ad- ms in the winter issue of *Foreign Af- urs* and then goes on to quote John e Carré to the effect that covert ctions recommend themselves to declining powers," to men and nstitutions feeling the loss of their trength and becoming fearful of hadows. In le Carré's observation it s the timid and servile mind that laces "ever greater trust in the magic ormulae and hocus-pocus of the spy vorld. When the king is dying, the harlatans rush in."

Enter, to music for military band, Henry Kissinger, General Haig, Ad- miral Poindexter, Colonel North, nd the braided company of Wash- ngton mountebanks, sophists, and eaping acrobats that drags behind it he wagons of the national security tate. In the American context, the ing is the spirit of liberty, which rightened and cynical people no onger know how to rule, and which, ratefully, they exchange for what hey imagine to be the shields of their nemies.

The theory and practice of covert nilitary action inevitably subverts ur own people as well as our institu- ions of government. The operatives n the employ of the White House or he intelligence agencies come to believe themselves surrounded by host of evil spirits shrieking in a oreign wind. Paranoid and easily onvinced of their virtue, they get n the habit of telling so many lies hat they no longer know their riends from their enemies.

Hindsight, of course, is easier than oresight, but I wish that at least one nember of the joint committees had aken the trouble to study the histori- al record and to raise his voice gainst the presiding superstition. I vish I wasn't so often reminded of a herd of docile cattle, lowing softly in pasture, waiting for Clint Eastwood or Admiral Poindexter or General Secord or Colonel North) to lead hem safely to slaughter. ■

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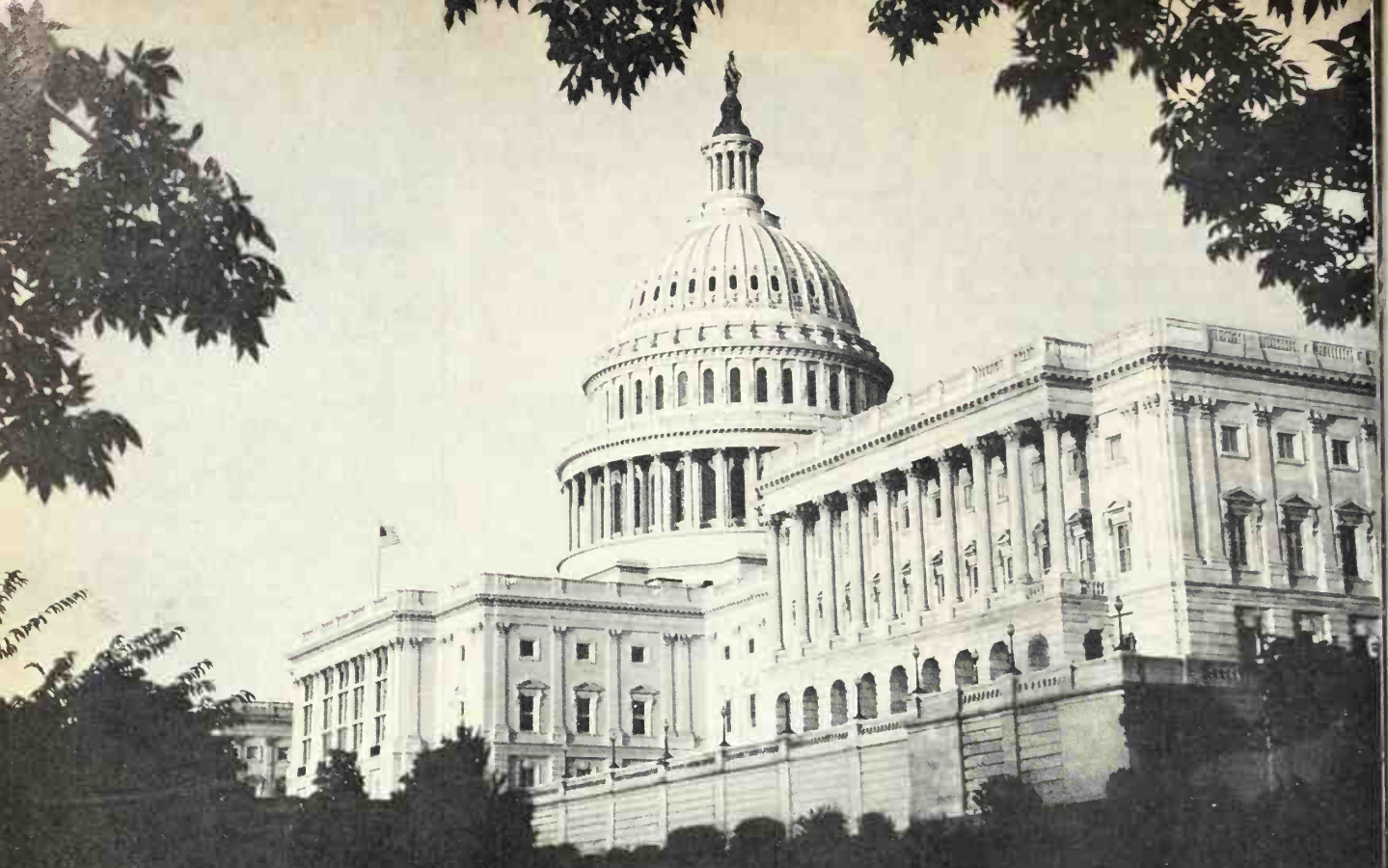

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HARPER'S INDEX

Dollars bought by Japan, Germany, and Britain in 1987 to support the currency's value : 78,000,000,000

Losses the top five Japanese insurance companies took on U.S. government securities in 1987 : $13,000,000,000

Percentage increase in public and private spending in the United States since 1982 : 27

In public and private spending among the top 12 trading partners of the United States since 1982 : 15

Percentage increase in the sales of Russian tractors in the United States in 1987 : 100

Percentage increase, since 1981, in speaking appearances by Soviets on the network evening news : 682

Number of times that Edwin Meese testified before grand juries in 1987 : 11

Rank of *Sports Illustrated*'s swimsuit issue among the items most often stolen from U.S. libraries : 1

Geiger counters Christie Brinkley carried with her on her recent trip to the Soviet Union : 1

Exclamation points in Tom Wolfe's *The Bonfire of the Vanities* : 2,343

Hand-carved marble columns in the living room of Donald Trump's Trump Tower triplex : 29

Cars abandoned on New York City streets last year : 116,765

Wallets found in Manhattan mail collection boxes by postal workers each day : 250

Percentage of first-class mail that is delivered on time, according to the U.S. Postal Service : 96

Medals awarded by the armed forces in 1986 : 407,031

Pairs of green socks the Defense Logistics Agency purchased in 1987 : 2,400,000

Number of condoms it purchased : 13,000,000

Number of lambs necessary to make one lambskin condom : 1

Number of Thai men who received free vasectomies last year on the king's birthday : 1,214

Percentage of married men and women who say they were worried about sex on their wedding night : 18

Rate of separation among Swedish couples who married after first living together (in percent) : 34

Among Swedish couples who married without first living together : 24

Average number of waking hours a two-income American couple spends together each weekday : 3.2

Cost to the U.S. Treasury of business deductions for meals and entertainment in 1988 : $6,400,000,000

Amount that Bryan Miller, the *New York Times* food critic, spends on restaurant meals each year : $80,000

Recipes in *Aggies, Moms, and Apple Pie,* a cookbook published by Texas A&M, that call for a can of cream soup : 41

Portion of the U.S. land area inhabited by two or fewer people per square mile : 1/4

Total number of guests Joe Franklin has had on his TV show : 138,000

Percentage change, in the first month of the 1987 season, in the three networks' combined prime-time rating : –11

Estimated number of Americans in a permanently vegetative state : 10,000

Percentage increase in fatalities on rural interstates where the speed limit was raised last year : 46

Rank of Florida in the number of prisoners executed by electrocution in 1986 : 1

In the number of people killed by lightning : 1

Duration of an adult's average cry (in minutes) : 6

Number of moles on the average adult's body : 25

Number of donkeys in the United States : 200,000

Number of elephants : 692

Tons of earth that will be moved to build the tunnel under the English Channel : 7,500,000

Tons of earth that groundhogs in New York State move each year while tunneling : 1,600,000

Figures cited are the latest available as of December 1987. Sources are listed on page 76.

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READINGS

[Speech]

ON THINKING THROUGH A LITTLE PROBLEM

By William H. Gass. Gass delivered "On Thinking Through a Little Problem" at the 1987 National Book Awards dinner in New York City, on November 9. His last essay for Harper's Magazine *was "Goodness Knows Nothing of Beauty," in the April 1987 issue.*

Let us suppose that I have a little problem that I want to think about. I say "suppose" because I have no penny-ante problems and will have to contrive one for this occasion. I also say "suppose" because I don't want you to think I'm being deviously autobiographical; that I'm wearing someone else's ski mask over my ashamed face. So let's suppose I have this difficulty—this kink in the hose of my life—and I want to give it some attention. I want to straighten it out. My wife says she needs to get away; she says she needs to get away to think about herself; she needs to think about herself for a change. This is copycatism, of course, carried to a point past meow. Just because I have a bit of a kink I'd like to consider, my wife claims she has some awful affliction and requires care. But the problem I want to think through is not the carbon-paper kitten I am married to. Actually, I tell her, if you go away to think about yourself that will give me the chance to think about my little ailment, my minor condition, a situation which could be described, superficially, as my dry skin. The truth is: I seem to be drying up. My wife agrees that this is an accurate, although rough, depiction. But I do not wish to share with you my dry skin or my apparent drying up like coffee in a saucer. I want to think instead of what we do when we want to think through a tiny kink or two—untie a knot in the line of life—and our wife has been considerate enough to go away to her hunting lodge upstate and let us. (My better half is liberated; she is liberated sufficiently to have a hut, but she doesn't have cronies yet, and she doesn't fish or hunt or play cards. Lack of cronies and a disinclination to fish are two of her problems, and she will probably want to ponder them while she's gone, sitting on the edge of the hut's lower bunk, perhaps, flopping her familiar scuffs—flip-flap—against the flat of her heels.)

I could consider a big problem, if I had one, suppose no simple supposition; but I shall be spared that, at least while my wife is away. The kids never grew up but at least they're gone. The cat has dumped his last dump on our fluffy orange rug. The car has new radials, my pens leak only washable inks, and the hot-water tap at the Legion Hall has been given a new hot-water handle. So it's pretty clear sailing, a cloudless sky, big-problem-wise. Even my skin is clear. It's just dry. My face scales when I shave as if my dewlaps had dandruff. My fingers fissure, my lifeline (what I meant when I said it had a knot) is red and runny, scabs build up where my shoes rub my ankles, and my author's pale elbows flake like aged paint. When I stop to think about it, which I'm about to do—I'm about to stop—I wonder whether too much, rather than too little, moisture may be the cause: washing dishes, peeling shrimp, boiling beef. I haven't cradle cap, my wife claims, but cradle coat. Soon she can sit on her bunk in her hunting hut and claim whatever she likes. A surfeit of wet—yes—the possibility is something I can dwell on during the armistice in our relations.

The last time my wife promised to vacate my life, she spent three weeks trembling on the

look. With her bags packed and cameras cocked, she lived on department-store purchases and dressed out of approval boxes. Get off the verge and into something comfortably ornate, I say, all sweetness; clench a strong set teeth. She merely snuffs an additional make-marked tone with bundles of heavy and whorls of lace, while continuing to dangle from the lip of action like Bogart's cig, unable to spell beyond the *d* in "indecision."

Suppose, as some suggest (indeed the sum grows larger as the world's boom wanes), we could think quite as well in diagrams and pictures as in words. Suppose we were visually literate, fully mature children of the cinema, the news-picture-porno-and-scandal magazines. Suppose we were really aged babies of the Brave New Boom, wholly TV tuned. And we chose to think about my little problem. What then?

Would we begin by picturing my conditions? No point in that when we could look at it if I would let me feel my face, inspect my peeling flanks, observe the little white nibbles of skin, fine-line tissues, patches of rough skin I could never reach the green tube with the swing of any arm. And nose-and-toe minds one can set between each hand-and I've applied to the cracks which drought-y nature has opened up, and we can both imagine the raw cuff around my ankles where my cruel shoes have rubbed. So we've looked, we've pictured: where's the thought?

A picture, diagram, or drawing may contain an amazing amount of data, but it is data that remains to be explained. Like the dwelt, it needs an overlay of names to make sense, a mental interpretation to become of value. The most visual experience of our children is simply more experience—the one as speechless as the other. For where there are no names there is nothing to be learned, as when lovemaking sinks into its last inarticulate gasp and groaning—because the most wisely wives of courtship and longing. He dreams of his desires; he even hallucinates while her, who is the object of them, she leaves by bus or train or aeroplane to ask for her visit in a glacial lake.

It is commonly said that words are substitutes for things (the words "glacial lake" for glacial lakes), but when words are thought (not simply vocalized) they are the very thoughts made, and the thought itself contains depths that are as cold, remote, and restless as those lakes upstate where my wife has gone to let down her line through the slate dark chop in search of what is probably a saltwater specie in any case.

Photographs are mostly memories of things taken by an eye so undiscerned it really isn't there, and memories of photographs, like the mental maps which lead us back to the corner where we washed the car, are developed in the dark, in the same space—the hall of the head—in which we hear music when, with lids closely closed, we watch the notes explode. These images, that is, these faint simulacra of things, perform in the arena of our experience, not on the theater of our thoughts.

S

o suppose we've taken a picture of a crumb-ish spot the size of a quarter, red and ropy, nesting between two ribs, and now we are about to think in pics about it, show a movie in our mind. First click: a sand-filled cave we remember from a famous flick, The Lost Patrol, where Victor McLaglen shoves a machine gun from the lap in the final frames. Second click: a pale blue patch of dried milk on the lair unscrewed the cat licked here I sucked him. But wasn't it the word "like" which supplied the connection between the two pictures, as if events had left these dim and hostile traces. Third click: I see a cloud of locusts shadowing a sunburned plain, warped dry boards which have sucked up every their own paint, overalls that look as the shoulders, the long wan faces. Again we're above, I see the Dust Bowl Days. Yes. Where is the line of resemblance? Where is the dust that's here? Come. Come with the word. So to dust we shall return, only as dust to disappear. Am I thing of dryness, I wonder, getting ahead of myself, going underground while still upside. This string of images has given me a word: "depression" is a those dirt dust blew out of the graves as they dug them; dust flew up like parkers prayers in darker heaven. Depression. That's my problem. It's not that I wake with an tongue tasted as old as with like henchmen in a curtain sandwich. I'm depressed. I'm morose. I'm nauseous. I must on succor in the morning. I rise on concern, but on wife is still here, wondering whether she should go upstairs to think about herself and why she married me, a man who put her pet to her favorite wrong hop, the one like crooked neck from Sardinia, the one with the narrow circle of knotted rope, and pinked the princess hip in a cocktail lounge behind a rack of steaks and a stuck of buns.

Whereupon wisely take note that sigh which will allow them to say something. And where in the world of men and women is there a rope whose down will not rise up and punch prickle at the whisper of the right word. Now then—where will these words come from? Classic: I've given up trying to think in pictures, even if one of them is of me with an her dark words, as I meet, on the edge of the dune in, her mystery, hair, dun in blond, a great clarity into her face like an impression in wax and over it the mirror gives me oodles of pleasure.

Do the words come in as mom and dad, "Hubby or baby and holding hands"—how is the

ittzy bitsy booby oodle? Ah, "oodle" again. Maybe the word did lodge in me long ago. The talc drifts down in a soft cloud to cover its nether regions—mine—and the baby—me—will soon be dry. So that's it! My ailment is actually a return to infancy, to beginnings instead of endings, to the good old yum young days. Then cradle cap isn't far off the mark.

Nor do our adolescent peers have much to say beyond "awesome" or "that's cool" or "weird." Vocabulary is not their forte. Nor their métier. It's not, in short, their "thing." Not these students of appearance. Nor do many of us speak or sing like Iago, whose bad company might improve our prose, gleefully undoing good, like blouse or trouser button, with a seductive word. Catnapper, she cried. You can't catnap your own cat, I averred. Can! Can't! You can kidnap your own kid. Nertz! Not the point, I shouted, losing myself in my own eloquence, bewildered by a sudden strangeness in my own backyard.

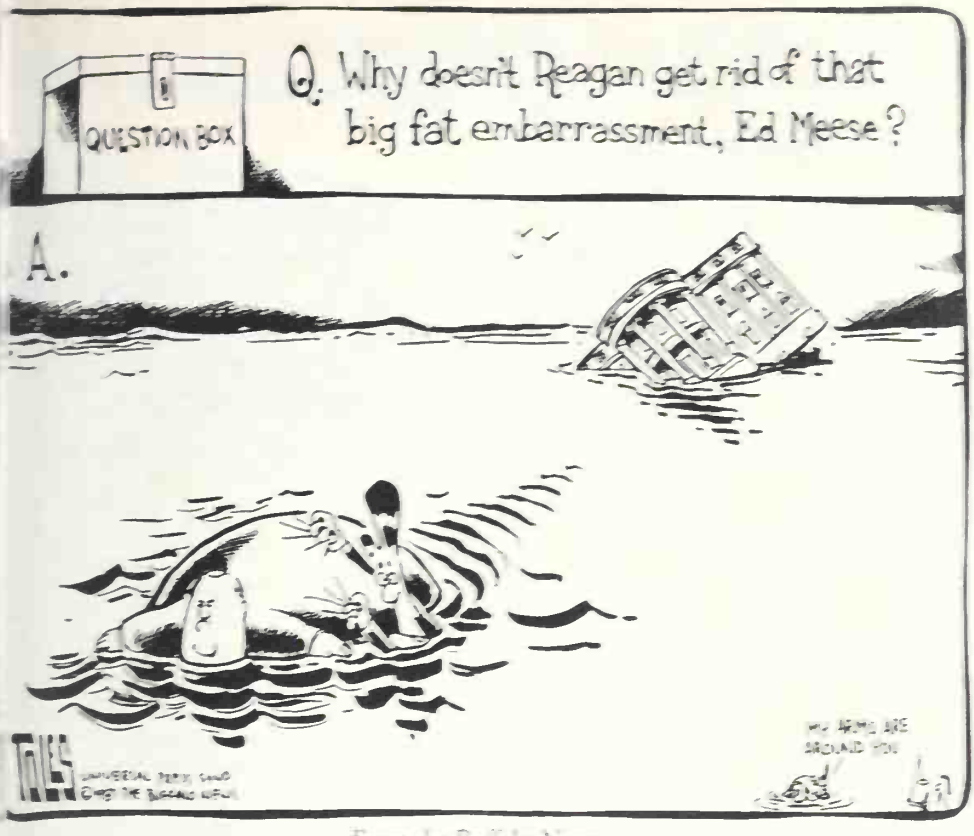
No. The rhetoric of reason is not earned early or by ear. We learn the words we need to know in order someday to think through a little problem (what to say to the busybody who brings back from the Pink Mouse Bar and Ratskeller a heaving bag of cat, for instance) from the books we read, from contexts of awesome accomplishment, from weird tales, cool times crossing the Antarctic. We get them by reading: randomly, rigorously, regularly—shall I add, religiously?—Thucydides, Leviticus, Montaigne, Gibbon, Tacitus, Lavoisier, Pascal, Frege, Twain. Old dry-as-dust, the kids used to call me, nose always in a book; the Brain, they said, brain for buttocks, brain for balls, not exactly my wife's words but close. Closing. So it's the library that's given me black lung and sent silverfish coursing through my flesh. All those sulfurous, brown, and broken pages that my skin has copied; all the hours breathing shelf dust; all the strain of dim stack light: they have taken their terrible toll. Take the freeway, I told her. It's quicker. What have I learned from those many gnawing wormy nights in the library or in my room, chaired, absent there but present in the heartfelts of others? I have become acquainted with the individual mind. She's not planning, is she, to bed some bug or other in that bunk, instead of perching in a ponder on its edge? Course not.

Words, words, words . . . they are not enough, even if we find them pasted over every item in our experience like the price: saucer, sack, cab fare for the waitress, her body busy on my stoop, holding the Sardinian string at arm's length; no, not nearly enough, words alone won't do, paws poking through the bag's no longer narrow warp (or is it woof?) aren't sufficient by themselves to say I seem to have put down and forgotten my pet-shop purchase in your watering hole, or to confess I had mislaid what I'd waylaid before.

Order, order, order . . . words are idle until in order, and these arrangements, sometimes cool, weird, and awesome, all together, are what a vigorous literacy (instead of a lazy one) provides us. I mean the melody, the pause, the period; I mean the passion, the diction, desire approaching desperation; I mean the stratifications of meaning, the gestures of the voice, the patterns of pronunciation and designs of data; I mean the hierarchies of concepts and descents of implication, chains of reasoning and leaps of association, the multitude of ways there are to think, to see, to feel, to wish for anything, to relate a story or respect an attitude, compose a memory or enact a resolution, concoct an excuse or dream a dream; to believe boldly, profoundly, ignobly; to borrow in the same way, freely or cheaply; to build big hurrahs of ideas, as Gaudi-awful as any strut for the street, or to be parsimonious to the point of creating out of nothing, or inventing from poor sour stuff a compliment to satisfy a queen; in brief, I mean what it means to have a style. Is that it? The folderol of the effete? Style?

My wife says she's going to change hers; she's going to get away and think about herself, her needs, for a change; change is going to be the big deal; and she knows she's going to have to seek it in herself since I won't—don't—change. I won't alter a shot or tipple of my drinking, for instance, which she maintains is the cause of my hydrophobia. I answer with some asperity that when a drinker stops drinking, everybody calls it "drying out." Another of your purely verbal solutions, she replies, helping herself to the dab of asperity left. Life is not a crossword puzzle. You think that if you can find a word or an acrostic phrase of twelve letters meaning dry skin you will have solved your little problem. All that coffee you guzzle in the morning, those noontime gins, the cocktail hour, the wine that holds your hand through dinner, and the bourbons that lower your spirits into bed as though it were the earth: they dehydrate you like the salt on your popcorn does, like the salt on your chips, and the red hots you need your scotch to cool, as your ardor has, cold and old now, a long time. I do hate speeches. I do hate being preached at, being reminded, chided, chivied, prodded, egged, girlie-guided.

I may remember some of the things that were said by the countless millions of words I've read, but finally what I've taken away from that rather constant encounter are habits of understanding, methods of reasoning, points of view, ranges of feeling. I've seen in some sentences a sensuality



From the Buffalo News.

more undergned and reciprocal than I've found in any men or many women. There comes a time in one's journeys, as jaded as every traveler becomes, when you wearily round yet another bend or top another hill and suddenly there, before you, is the landscape of a human spirit brought to hitherto unrealized perfection. There are people who have talked to God, only to become, in consequence, selfish, bossy, arrogant, and peevish, so I shall not claim that these experiences have made me a mentally stronger person; but I do dare to think they have made me a more interesting and interested one, although my wife denies even this small improvement and insists that I am but a brittle twig, a stubby pencil without lead or eraser. Heraclitus says dry souls are best, I reply in my learned defense, but my wife wants to know what he said about bodies: about scaling knees, chapped lips, earwax that rattles like a pebble in a gourd. And in my defense, again, I shall set down something true: that I am not bored by my own mind; that I am willing to listen at least to my own head; and that I am attentive because my mind is not merely mine, but is inhabited by a multitude of borrowed voices—borrowed, yet still the best, that I have visited the blessed of this world; and that that counts for something, though I confess it won't buy me way through the Pearly Gates or even over the Triborough Bridge.

She plans to go out in style: out the door, down the walk, away in her cab to the country. Out without her baggage which remains to sop up the hall light. Without her cures, her purse, and all her aids. She says she'll shove her mouth off when she wants to kill deer, and fish with her fingers. She says she'll set her changer ringing like a rally of angels. As for me, I shall disappear in the time to come as it goes past. Too late to say "wait."

Because what is writing but a rewinding of a world which has come unravelled? That disassociation of sensibility we have been said to suffer from, those splits of personality, factional politics, grim oppositions of opinion, abuses of power, and the absence of any proper sense of real equality or genuine subordination, the decline, if not the total disappearance, of the subjunctive, along with the general rise of the simple-minded mind: where can we find them healed, restored, resolved, in a semblance of solution, alas, but on the page, and often in the work of art, hurray, where the hand-in-hand is held out to all of us.

I've tried oils, unguents, lotions, arnica sticks, lanolins, cotton gloves packed with goo,

He sees the thing

March from Selma, 1965

Monrovia, Liberia, Early 60's

Boy in Harlem, Mid 60's

West Virginia, Early 50's

West Virginia, Early 50's

Carmen de Lavallade and son, 1960

ve wish we'd seen.

Coretta King and daughter Bernice, 1968

You are looking at images of an era, photographs taken over 30 turbulent years of challenge and change. They are part of an extraordinary exhibition titled "Moneta Sleet, Jr.: Pulitzer-Prize Photojournalist" at the Martin Luther King Memorial Library from January 28 through February 29, 1988.

Since 1955, Sleet has been a working photographer for Ebony and Jet magazines, with an insider's ticket to great events and a magician's trick of snatching the timeless moment from the stream of time. It was he who isolated and rescued, from the devastating tragedy of the death of Martin Luther King Jr., an unforgettable image of enduring serenity and, from the terrors of the March from Selma, the forever blithe spirit of the woman marcher, clapping hands to the sound of singing in the rain. Wherever he goes, he sees things we would like to have seen, and now we can.

That's one reason we sponsored this exhibition and why we urge you to see it. In our business, as in yours, we need to be reminded that we must look beneath the surface and see the timeless as well as the temporary, the enduring as well as the fleeting. Sponsorship of art that reminds us of these things is not patronage, it's a business and human necessity.

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might not want to include the above material in a *formal* kit. That might give the appearance that we consider this a major event. Instead we might send some material, only when asked, in a regular API envelope.

[Memorandum]

HOW REPUBLICANS 'SPREAD' AIDS

From an internal memorandum leaked by an employee of Charlton Research, a political consulting firm in San Francisco that has done work for the Republican party. The memo was leaked to the Bay Area Reporter, *a local newspaper, in September. According to the* Reporter, *the memorandum was written by Chuck Rund, who owns Charlton Research, to Harvey Dinnerstein, an associate at the firm. Rund, a deputy manager of President Reagan's 1984 campaign, denies writing the memo; he claims it was composed and leaked by a disgruntled former aide. Rund did, however, verify other documents leaked at the same time as authentic.*

September 17, 1987

CONFIDENTIAL NOTE

TO: HD
FROM: CR
RE: AIDS Issue

The AIDS issue could easily be a paramount one in 1988. It is important that it be used effectively and wisely. It is an explosive issue that could easily backfire if [handled] in a heavy or blatant way.

Nationally, SRC [Senate Republican Committee], the Bush campaign, the Washington governor campaign, and the Robertson campaign are exploring ways to harness public reaction to the AIDS issue. It will be used in major races in both Texas and Florida.

In California it is a mixed bag. Some Republicans (Maddy [a Republican state senator], Quackenbush [an aide to Republican governor George Deukmejian]) refuse to try and exploit it, but many are more than willing. If we do, we *must* be discreet. An example of how not to approach it is Congressman Dannemeyer [R., Calif.]. At the meeting two weeks ago, he was terrifying—practically foaming at the mouth anytime anyone made even a sympathetic reference to people with AIDS. Someone like Dannemeyer is a live grenade on this issue and far too emotional to do any good; indeed I fear that he would scare a lot of people. [Republican state senator] Doolittle's approach is far better: sound reasonable, play the emotion, and above all make it appear as if the party is responding to a public ground swell rather than inciting one. We must avoid being labeled as extremists; the recent fate of the La Rouche and the Briggs initiatives [Republican state senator John Briggs introduced a bill in the state legislature to prohibit gays from teaching in public schools] prove that an outright attack will be rejected by the voters.

This is the plan for the [Democratic state senator] Garamandi campaign. We shall make contact with various pro-life, family organizations and have them launch campaigns. In Garamandi's district, the Century Assembly of God Church seems a likely ally. They are hardworking, politically ignorant, but as zealous as Dannemeyer. Attacking Garamandi as Pro-Abortion, Pro-Gay and therefore Pro-AIDS might prove to be easy.

Not only could the AIDS issue help us to gain ground in '88, but it might help us hang on [in places] where some of our people are in trouble (Dornan [R., Calif.]). *Again, the Republican party must never seem to be inciting a reaction, only responding to it.* If we are low-key, sound logical, and stress the importance of "protecting" families from the disease, then we could find ourselves in excellent shape in '88.

[Paper]

A SHORT HISTORY OF LOVE

From "Passionate Attachments in the West in Historical Perspective," by Lawrence Stone, in Passionate Attachments: Thinking About Love. *The volume is a collection of the papers delivered at a conference co-sponsored by Columbia University Psychoanalytic Center and the Association for Psychoanalytic Medicine in New York City. It was edited by Willard Gaylin and Ethel Person, and published by the Free Press. Stone is Dodge Professor of History and Director of the Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies at Princeton.*

Historians and anthropologists are in general agreement that romantic love—the usually brief but intensely felt and all-consuming attraction toward another person—is culturally conditioned. Love has a history. It is common only in certain societies at certain times, or even in certain social groups within those societies, usually the elite, which have the leisure to cultivate such feelings. Scholars are, however, less certain whether romantic love is merely a cultural-

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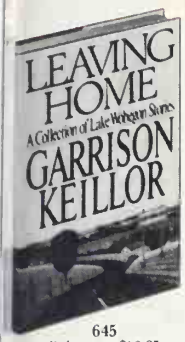

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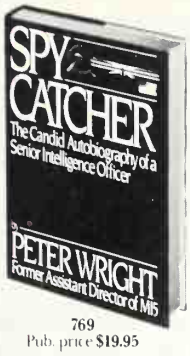

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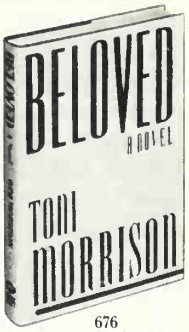

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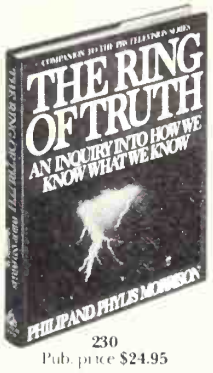

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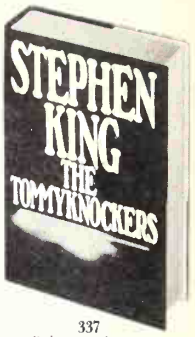

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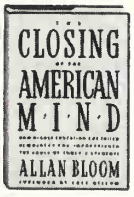

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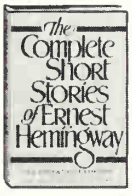

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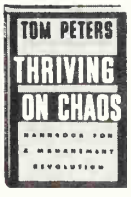

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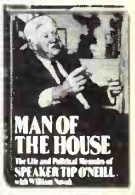

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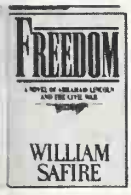

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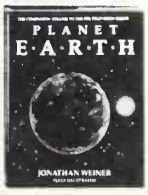

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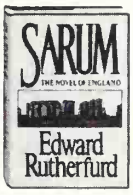

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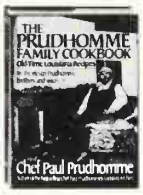

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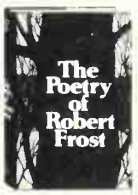

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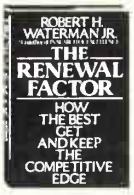

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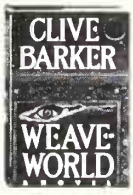

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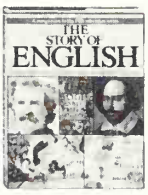

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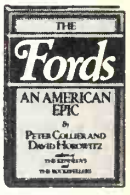

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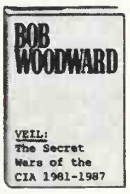

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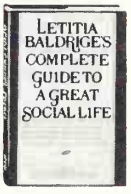

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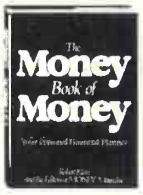

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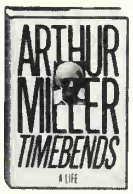

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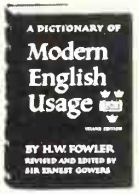

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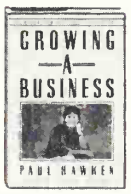

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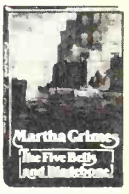

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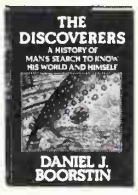

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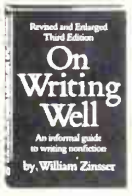

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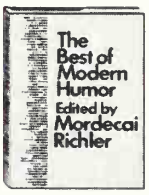

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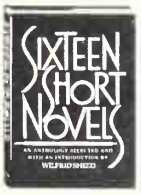

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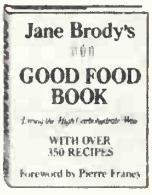

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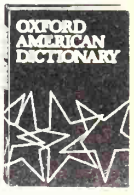

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ly induced psychological overlay on top of the biological drive for sex, or whether it has biochemical roots that operate quite independently from the libido. Would anyone in fact "fall in love" if they had not read about it or heard it talked about? Did poetry invent love, or love poetry?

Some things can be said with certainty about the history of the phenomenon. The first is that cases of romantic love can be found in all times and places and have often been the subject of powerful poetic expression, from the Song of Solomon to Shakespeare. On the other hand, as anthropologists have discovered, neither social approbation nor the actual experience of romantic love is common to all societies. Second, historical evidence for romantic love before the age of printing is largely confined to elite groups, which of course does not mean that it may not have occurred lower on the social scale. As a socially approved cultural artifact, romantic love began in Europe in the southern French aristocratic courts of the twelfth century, and was made fashionable by a group of poets, the troubadours. In this case the culture dictated that it should occur between an unmarried male and a married woman, and that it either should go sexually unconsummated or should be adulterous.

By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, our evidence becomes quite extensive, thanks to the spread of literacy and the printing press. We now have love poems, such as Shakespeare's sonnets, love letters, and autobiographies by women concerned primarily with their love lives. The courts of Europe were evidently hotbeds of passionate intrigues and liaisons, some romantic, some sexual. The printing press also began to spread pornography to a wider public, thus stimulating the libido, while the plays of Shakespeare indicate that romantic love was a concept familiar to society at large, which composed his audience.

Whether this romantic love was approved of, however, is another question. We simply do not know how Shakespearean audiences reacted to *Romeo and Juliet*. Did they, like us (and as Shakespeare clearly intended), fully identify with the young lovers? Or, when they left the theater, did they continue to act like the Montague and Capulet parents, who were trying to stop these irresponsible adolescents from allowing an ephemeral and irrational passion to interfere with the serious business of politics and patronage?

What is certain is that every advice book, every medical treatise, every sermon and religious homily of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries firmly rejected both romantic passion and lust as suitable bases for marriage. In the sixteenth century, marriage was thought to be best arranged by parents, who could be relied upon to choose socially and economically suitable partners. People believed that the sexual bond would automatically create the necessary harmony between the two strangers in order to maintain the stability of the new family unit. This assumption is not, it seems, unreasonable, since recent investigations in Japan have shown that there is no difference in the rate of divorce between couples whose marriages were arranged by their parents and couples whose marriages were made by individual choice based on romantic love.

In the eighteenth century, orthodox opinion about marriage began to shift from subordinating the individual will to the interests of the group, and from economic or political considerations toward those of well-tried personal affection. The ideal marriage was one preceded by three to six months of intensive courting by a couple from families roughly equal in social status and economic wealth; that courtship, however, took place only with the prior consent of parents on both sides. But it was not until the

[Memorandum]

AIDS ALERT

This memorandum was distributed last fall to faculty and staff of the Noble, Oklahoma, public-school system.

TO: Faculty and Staff
FROM: William Martin, Superintendent
SUBJECT: AIDS Education
DATE: September 24, 1987

1. To ensure that there will be no confusion regarding references to *aides* as opposed to AIDS, we will drop all reference to *aides* in Noble Public Schools. All job descriptions and correspondence which refer to *aides* should be changed to *assistant*.

2. Let me remind you that House Bill 1476, passed and signed into law by the governor on April 24, 1987 restricts any teaching on the subject of AIDS. Any curriculum which teaches about AIDS must be approved by the Noble School Board and reviewed in a public meeting. Since neither of these events has happened, you are not authorized to teach any AIDS curriculum. This includes movies, tapes, etc.

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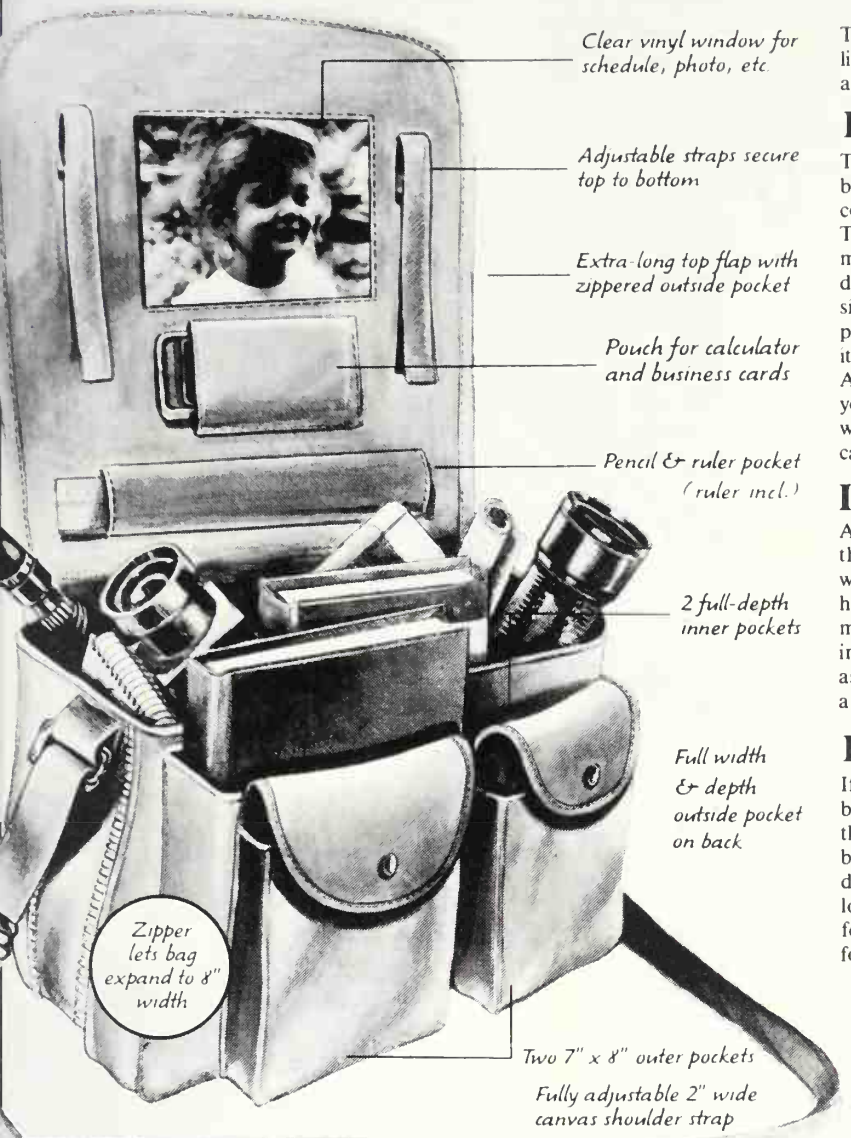
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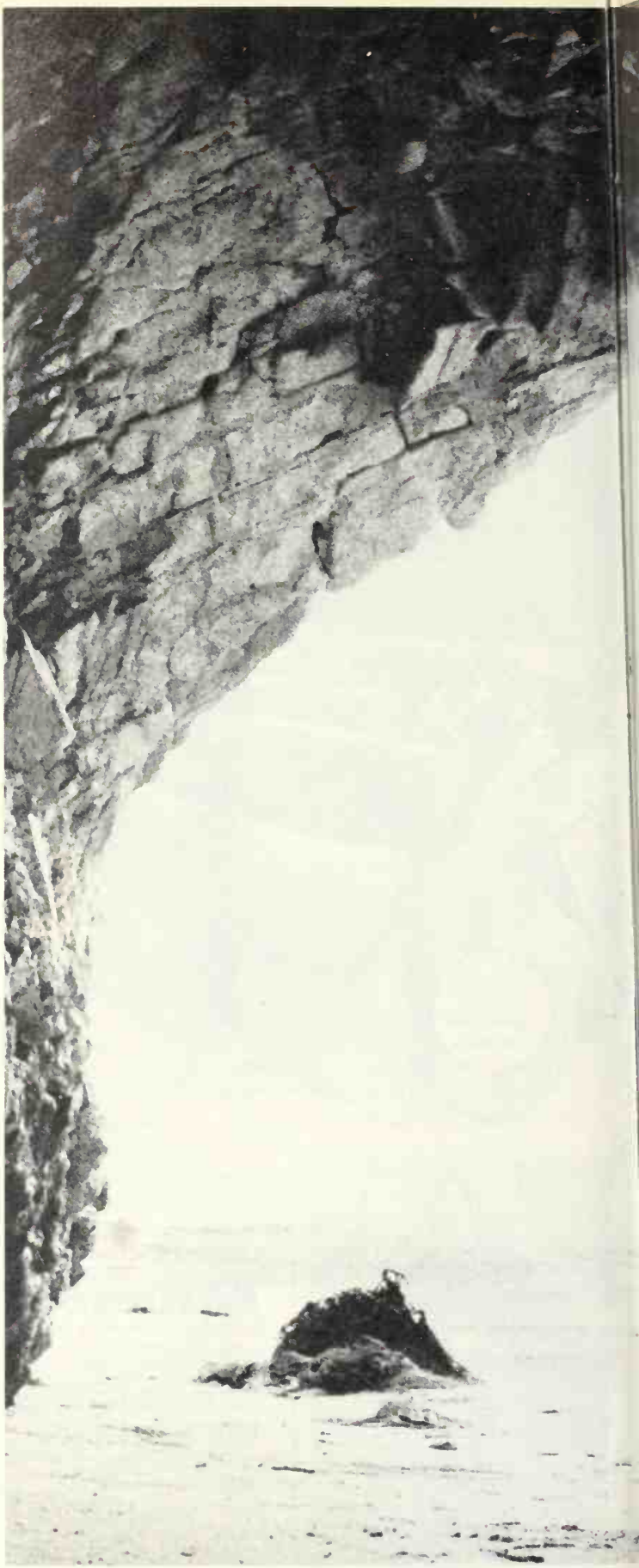


IF YOU LOOK HARD ENOUGH, YOU'L

PRISED WHAT YOU MIGHT FIND.

From a portfolio of photographs by Terry Yank in Sulfur, *No. 20, a literary magazine published three times a year at Eastern Michigan University, in Ypsilanti. Yank lives in New York City.*

Romantic movement and the rise of the novel, especially the pulp novel in the nineteenth century, that society accepted a new idea—that it is normal and indeed praiseworthy for young men and women to fall passionately in love, and that there must be something wrong with those who fail to have such an overwhelming experience sometime in late adolescence or early adulthood. Once this new idea was publicly accepted, the arrangement of marriage by parents came to be regarded as intolerable and immoral.

Today, the role of passionate attachments between adults is obscured by a new development: the saturation of the whole culture—through every medium of communication—with the belief that sexuality is the predominant and overriding human drive, a doctrine whose theoretical foundations were provided by Freud. In no past society known to me has sex been given so prominent a role in the culture at large, nor has sexual fulfillment been elevated to such preeminence in the list of human aspirations—in a vain attempt to relieve civilization of its discontents. We find it scarcely credible today that in most of Western Europe in the seventeenth century, in a society in which people usually married in their late twenties, a degree of chastity was practiced that kept the illegitimacy rate—without contraceptives—as low as 2 or 3 percent. Today, individualism is given such absolute priority in most Western societies that people are virtually free to act as they please, to sleep with whom they please, and to marry and divorce when and whom they please. The psychic (and, more recently, the physical) costs of such behavior are now becoming clear, however, and how long this situation will last is anybody's guess.

Here I should point out that the present-day family—I exclude the poor black family in America from this generalization—is not, as is generally supposed, disintegrating because of the very high divorce rate—up to 50 percent. It has to be remembered that the median duration of marriage today is almost exactly the same as it was 100 years ago. Divorce, in short, now acts as a functional substitute for death: both are means of terminating marriage at a premature stage. The psychological effects on the survivor may well be very different, although in most cases the catastrophic economic consequences

for women remain the same. But the point to be emphasized is that broken marriages, stepchildren, and single-parent households were as common in the past as they are today.

The most difficult historical problem regarding romantic love concerns its role among the propertyless poor. Since they were propertyless, their loves and marriages were of little concern to their kin, and they were therefore more or less free to choose their own mates. By the eighteenth century, and probably before, court records make it clear that the poor often married for love, combined with a confused set of motives including lust and the economic necessity to have a strong and healthy assistant to run the farm or the shop. It was generally expected that they would behave "lovingly" toward each other, but this often did not happen. In many a peasant marriage, the husband seems to have valued his cow more than his wife. Passionate attachments among the poor certainly occurred, but how often they took priority over material interests we may never know for certain.

Finally, we know that in the eighteenth century—unlike the seventeenth—at least half of all brides in England and America were pregnant on their wedding day. But this fact tells us more about sexual customs than about passionate attachments: sex began at the moment of engagement, and marriage in church came later, often triggered by the pregnancy. We also know that if a poor servant girl was impregnated by her master, which often happened, the latter usually had no trouble finding a poor man who would marry her, in return for payment of ten pounds or so. Not much passion there.

Passionate attachments between young people can and do happen in any society as a by-product of biological sexual attraction, but the social acceptability of the emotion has varied enormously over time and class and space, determined primarily by cultural norms and property arrangements. We are in a unique position today in that our culture is dominated by romantic notions of passionate love as the only socially admissible reason for marriage; sexual fulfillment is accepted as the dominant human drive and a natural right for both sexes; and contraception is normal and efficient. Behind all this lies a frenetic individualism, a restless search for a sexual and emotional ideal in human relationships, and a demand for instant ego gratification.

Most of this is new and unique to our culture. It is, therefore, quite impossible to assume that people in the past thought about and experienced passionate attachments the way we do. Historical others—even our own forefathers and mothers—were indeed other.

[Poem]

FIRST WE SET UP THE CHAIRS

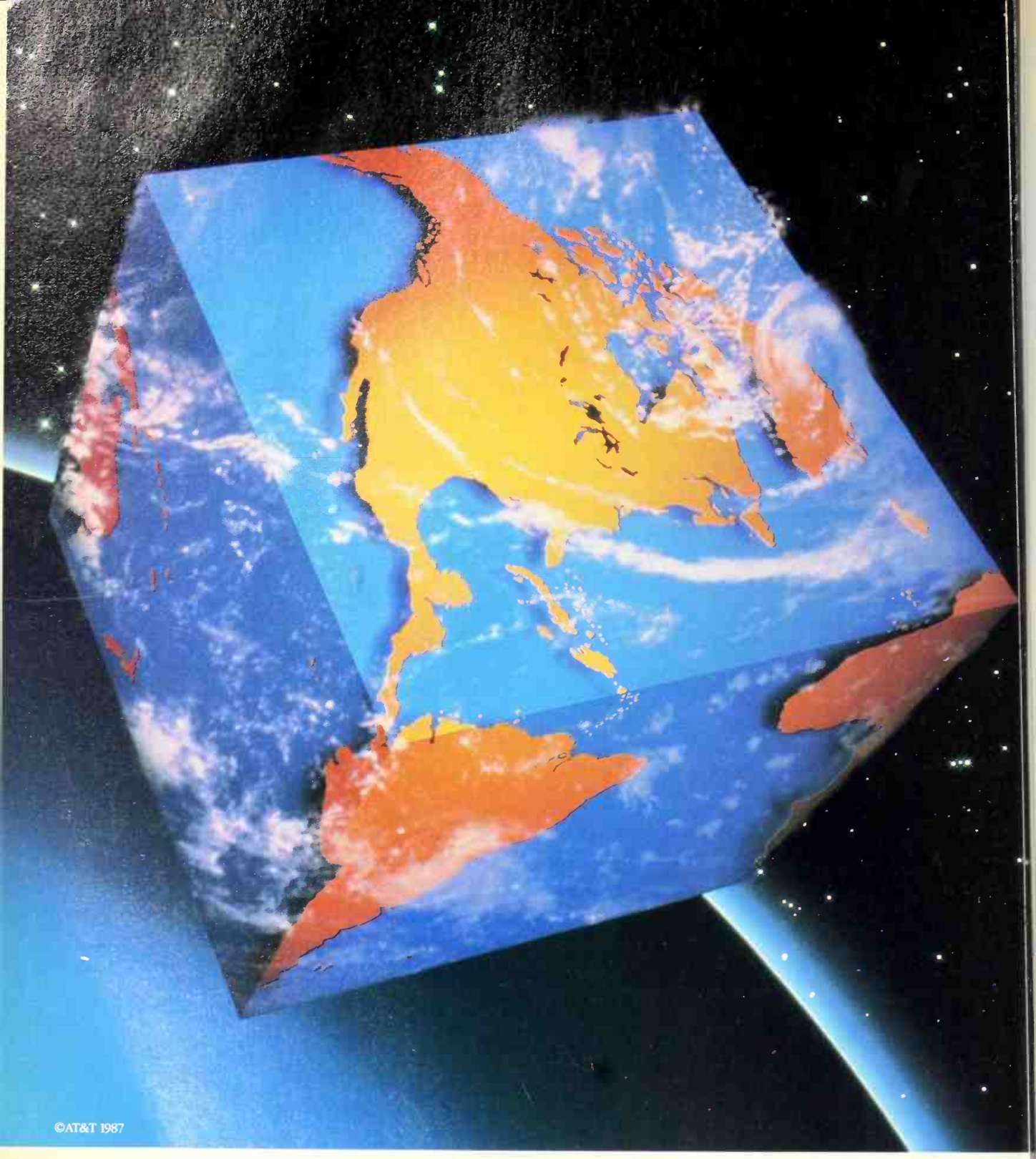
"First We Set Up the Chairs and Then We Put the Blankets on Top. Now We Have a Nice Little House Just for Us. Now Let's Pretend That I'm the Daddy and You're the Mommy and We Talk Like They Do When They Think We're Asleep. OK?" by Ariel Dorfman. From Last Waltz in Santiago, and Other Poems of Exile and Disappearance, *a collection of Dorfman's poems to be published next month by Viking/Penguin. Translated from the Spanish by the author and Edith Grossman.*

If they come for me at night . . .
Then I pretend I'm the mommy who
knows what to do—
Wait until morning
and go see the lawyer don Alfonso.
And if they come during the day . . .
Then I let Leandro know
through the party.
Just make sure they're not watching you.
Just make sure they're not watching me.

And if they take you away too?
That will never happen.
But if they decide to take you away
too?
Then make believe I'm the mommy who
says
that the oldest,
Juan,
will know what to do.
Now they talk about us.
They talk about us?
About you and me and Juan,
don't you remember?
But I always
fall asleep.

What if they take the children?
That's what you have to ask
if you're the mommy.
That's what I have to ask?
What if they take the children?
That's what I ask, right?
Then I pretend to be the daddy
And I start to yell and say
don't ask stupid questions,
not even they would do that.
And if I'm the mommy
what did I say then?
What do I say then?

You don't say anything.
You just stay quiet.
Just like now.



Where would we
educated

An educated guess can illuminate our world and change the way we see ourselves.

As a company that began with one of the greatest educated guesses of all time, AT&T has a compelling interest in nurturing the educated guessers of tomorrow.

That's why we're involved in so many programs that inspire, encourage and enable young men and women to get an education.

We're helping students in colleges and universities across the nation, with scholarships, computers, lab equipment and AT&T visiting professors.

Much of our support of higher education is done through the AT&T Foundation. Among the programs it sponsors is the AT&T Bell Laboratories PhD Scholarship Program that develops some of the finest young minds in computer science, engineering, physics and chemistry.

To keep engineering education up-to-date, the AT&T Foundation helps engineering schools develop new curricula in manufacturing disciplines.

To assist minority students, the AT&T Foundation supports organizations such as the United Negro College Fund, the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering and the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund.

A special AT&T Bell Laboratories program also supports minorities and women in science and engineering. And an AT&T sponsored program in engineering and computer science is helping ten historically Black colleges and universities produce some of the nation's most talented young engineers.

At AT&T, we know that the quality of life tomorrow depends on the quality of education today. So it's our educated guess that investing in education is the smartest thing we can do.

be without the guess?

[Interrogation]

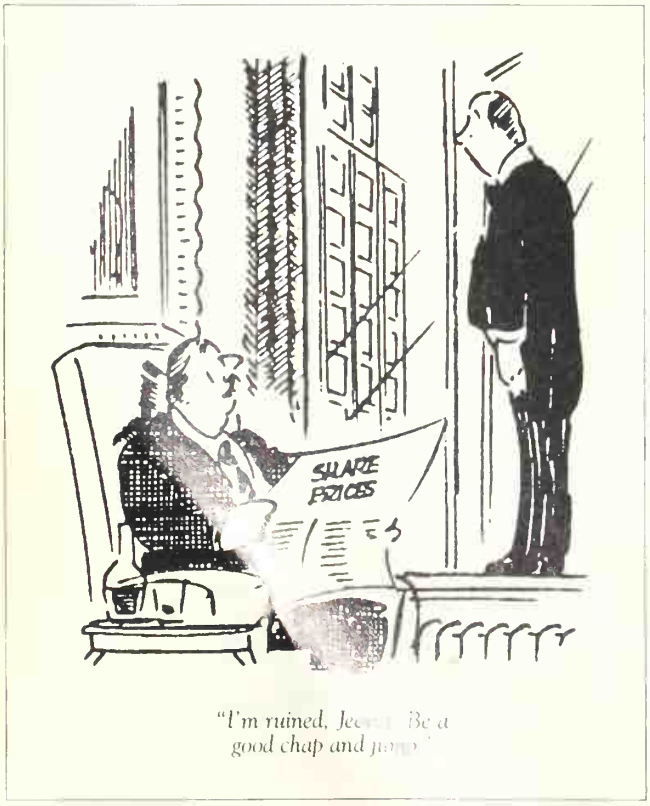
ART AND MONEY

From the transcript of the interrogation of British artist James Stephen George Boggs by a Scotland Yard inspector. Boggs was arrested in October 1986 and charged with reproducing British pound notes, a crime under the Forgery and Counterfeiting Act. For several years Boggs has offered his creations—actual-size ink drawings of pound notes—as payment for purchases. A merchant who chose to accept Boggs's drawing could either keep it or sell it to collectors for more than its "face" value. To date, Boggs has used his drawings in more than 700 transactions worth approximately $35,000. Last November, a jury found Boggs not guilty.

This afternoon, from the Young Unknowns Gallery, I took possession of a number of drawn items which resembled Bank of England currency. Did you paint or draw those items?

The works of art are original works from my own hand and are not reproductions, nor are they currency.

But you agree that some of the items contain many, if not all, of the detail contained in certain Bank of England currencies.



"I'm ruined, Jeeves. Be a good chap and jump."

ROTHCO

From the London Sunday Telegraph.

A painting of a horse may contain depictions of details created by God, yet you would not place a saddle on that painting.

I now have possession of what appears to me to be a painting or drawing of a £10 note. It quite clearly says "Bank of England," and appears to my mind to be an attempt to reproduce an item similar to genuine British currency. Did you draw or paint that article?

It is my job to allow my thoughts and feelings to be expressed and communicated through visual work of my hands. For art to be true and just and honest, I must allow my inner self out.

Did you draw or paint it?

This is a small piece of me that is part of me.

Did you draw or paint it? I accept what you appear to be trying to indicate, but have you for any reason drawn or painted that? The question I am asking is not about why you might have done it, but if you did it.

I truly don't mean to be difficult. The work originates in a hidden and subconscious part of my being. Can I claim total responsibility for all things that make me a human being, being that I consider this to be part of or a reflection of myself? I've gone into my mind to the place where art originates—and it is a very expansive place: I have yet to dent the territory. I am only beginning to explore it.

Did you with your hand with a pen, pencil, or paintbrush—irrespective of the reasons, whatever they may have been, which caused you to do it—paint, draw, or color this item?

If you are asleep and you have a dream, are you responsible for the creation of that dream? I have bled onto this piece of work.

At anytime have you given any one of these items to any person intending that they accept it as being a genuine Bank of England note?

No.

Have you used any of these items to purchase any property or in payment for services?

I have given people the opportunity to possess one of these works in exchange for a relative value far below their actual worth. Many of these people love my work, cannot afford to go into my gallery and buy one for £250 or £500. Nonetheless, they desire them, and it is my experience that their desire is based on an appreciation of art. I have never sold a piece of work like these at the drawn [face] value.

Did any of the persons to whom you gave your work believe they were Bank of England notes?

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—*New York Times Book Review*

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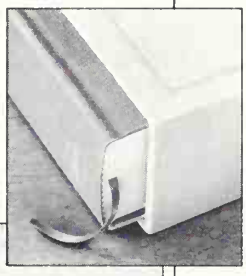
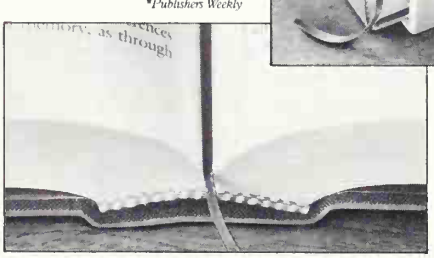
**Publishers Weekly*





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6H22

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At no time have I parted with one of these works when there was any shadow of a doubt about its being a work of art. I have always given the clear choice of accepting a work of art or accepting legal tender. I would like to say I have never up to the present sold an "unspent" drawing. All the drawings to this date which have been sold in the galleries were purchased from the owners at prices far in excess of the drawn face values and resold by those galleries at tremendous profits of which I have never received a single pence.

It appears to me that certain criminal offenses have been committed, in particular producing reproductions of Bank of England notes without authority, and also there is a possibility that an offense of producing counterfeit currency has also been committed. I must again caution you that you are not obliged to say anything, but what you do say may be taken down in writing and given in evidence.

I am an artist, not a criminal. If I have committed an offense, it was the crime of being born, which was not my choice.

[Dress Code]

NEW NAVAL OPTIONS

The following revision of the Navy's uniform regulations was recently issued by the Pentagon.

1. This uniform advisory announces policies recently approved by the Chief of Naval Operations to improve the quality of life for naval personnel.

2. Women's grooming (braids): a maximum of two braids, neatly secured at all points to the head, is authorized for women in uniform.

3. Cold-weather ear protection: navy blue earmuffs are authorized for optional wear with service and working uniforms when outer garments are worn.

4. Umbrellas for men: Navy men in uniform are authorized to carry an umbrella (as an optional item). The umbrella will be plain, solid black, without ornamentation. It may be carried when weather conditions warrant, provided safety regulations or practices are not violated. The umbrella will be carried in the left hand to permit saluting. It will not be carried during military formations or used as a cane or walking stick.

[Lexicon]

WORD PERFECT

From They Have a Word for It: A Lighthearted Lexicon of Untranslatable Words and Phrases, *by Howard Rheingold. To be published next month by Jeremy P. Tarcher.*

attaccabottonai (ah-TAHKA-bo-TONE-ee; Italian; noun): a doleful bore who buttonholes people and tells sad, pointless tales.

bol (BOWL; Mayan; noun/adjective): stupid in-laws.

dohada (doe-HOD-uh; Sanskrit; noun): the unusual appetites or longings of pregnant women.

farpotshket (far-POTCH-ket; Yiddish; noun): something that is all fouled up, especially as the result of an attempt to fix it.

fierabend (fire-AH-bend; German; noun): festive frame of mind at the end of the working day.

frotteur (fraw-TOUR; French; noun): a man who rubs up against strangers in a crowd.

fucha (FOO-hah; Polish; verb): to use company time and resources for personal ends.

katzenjammer (KOTZ-uhn-yomur; German; noun): a monumentally severe hangover.

koro (KORE-oh; Chinese; noun): the hysterical belief that one's penis is shrinking.

masa bodoa (MAH-sah boh-DOE-ah; Javanese; adjective): sociopolitically passive and unaware.

mokita (moe-KEE-tah; Kiriwana, New Guinea; noun): truth everybody knows but nobody speaks.

mbuki-mvuki (em-BOO-kee-em-VOO-kee; Bantu; verb): to shuck off one's clothes in order to dance.

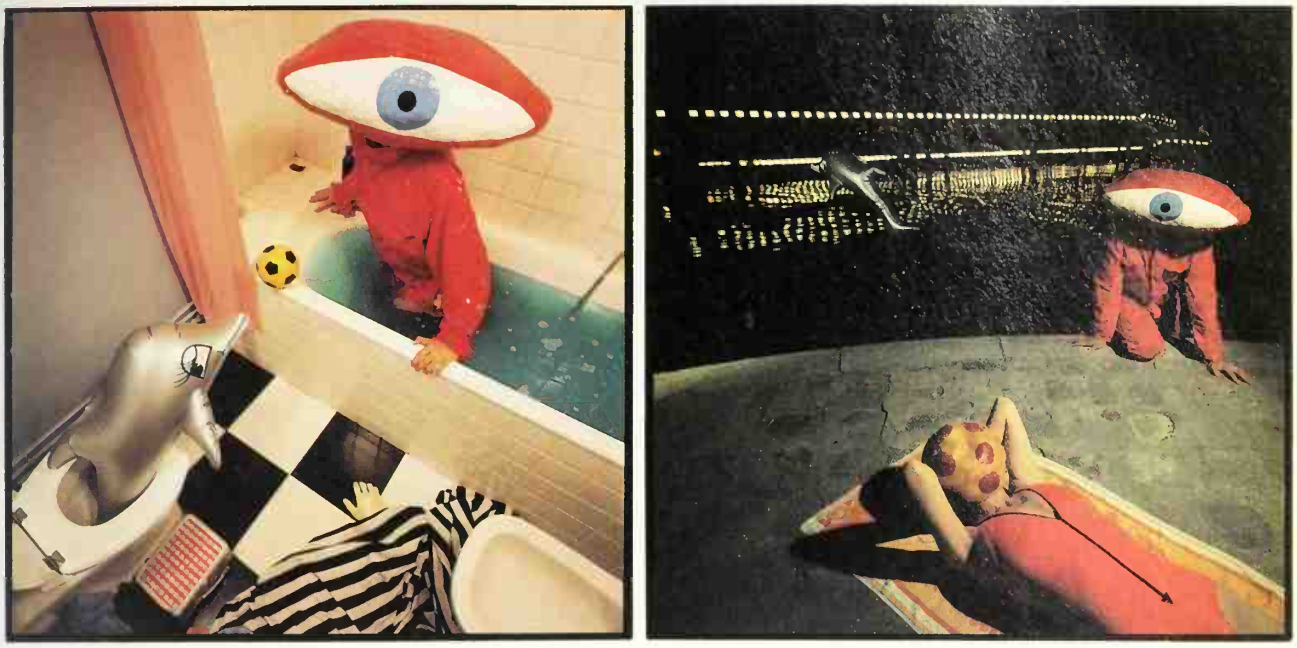
ondinnonk (ON-din-onk; Iroquoian; noun): the soul's innermost benevolent desires.

papierkrieg (pah-PEER-creeg; German; noun): complicated paperwork involved in making a complaint.

radfahrer (ROD-far-ur; German; noun): someone who flatters superiors and browbeats subordinates.

razbliuto (ros-blee-OO-toe; Russian; noun): the feeling a person retains for someone he or she once loved.

sitike (SIT-ee-KAY; Apache; noun): in-laws who are formally committed to help during crises.



From a portfolio of photographs by Anders Nordström in Picture Show, *Number 3, a photography quarterly published in Stockholm.*

tartle (TAR-tul; Scottish; verb): to hesitate in recognizing a person or thing.

talkin (TALL-keen; Indonesian; verb) to whisper instructions to the dying.

wabi (wah-BI; Japanese; noun): a flawed detail that creates an elegant whole.

yoin (yoh-EEN; Japanese; noun): experiential reverberation that continues to move one long after the initial external stimulus has ceased.

zivilcourage (ZEE-veal koo-rahj; German; noun): the courage to express unpopular opinions.

[Book Proposal]

GORILLA TALES

By Donald E. McLeod, in Q3, *the Fall 1987 issue of the* Quarterly. *McLeod is an actor.*

For the past eight years I've made my mark in the entertainment industry by wearing a $30,000 gorilla suit. Do you remember the luggage-smashing gorilla on the American Tourister commercials? That was me. I've also been featured as a gorilla in many other commercials and films, including *Trading Places* and *The Man With Two Brains*. This November I'll be starring in a segment of *Amazing Stories* called *Bigger Than a Bread Box*. The NBC *Today Show* has called me "America's Foremost Gorilla Actor." So I would like you to consider publishing my nonfiction book called *Gorilla Tales—Life as a Professional Monkey*.

My book is a socially conscious look at the eighties, as seen through the eyes of a literate gorilla—it's fast-paced, irreverent, and anecdotal. If Woody Allen and Hunter Thompson were molecularly fused and crammed into a state-of-the-art gorilla suit, they might well come up with something similar to my observations.

My occupation allows me the freedom to run rampant through shopping malls, city streets, televisions studios, and movie sets. I always get the girl, I never have to pay for things I break, and I'm highly paid. I do what everyone would, at one time or another, like to do—simply go berserk for a few minutes in this rigid and programmed society of ours. I believe *Gorilla Tales* offers the vicarious release that the public is yearning for.

In recent years there have been a number of fine books written *about* gorillas, and certainly there's no shortage of "Hollywood Star" autobiographies. My book is different.

ESSENCE AND UNIQUENESS OF MY BOOK

Gorilla Tales chronicles the bizarre adventures of America's premier gorilla actor. It will be the first nonfiction book to examine the primal side

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Engineers from our Truck and Bus Group, working with GM's Hughes Aircraft subsidiary, have developed systems which helped make the plants where these trucks are built models for the world. They're the all-new Fort Wayne, Indiana, plant and the completely rebuilt plants at Pontiac, Michigan, and Oshawa, Ontario.

In these plants one of the most sophisticated electronic tools in the world—called MAP (Manufacturing Automation Protocol) and developed with the help of EDS, another GM subsidiary—integrates the processes that permit consistent and precise manufacturing.

How can we say these are the best-built trucks in the world? By comparing how they are built: Assembly tolerances are consistently held at plus or minus half a millimeter assuring a near-perfect body on every truck. Most structural steel and all exterior sheet metal, except the roof, is two-sided galvanized. Anti-corrosion phosphate is applied to each truck by immersion, guaranteeing complete coverage. The base coat/clear coat paint application is totally automated for consistent quality control.

The Chevrolet and GMC Sierra full-size pickups are another triumph of teamwork and technology. At GM, teamwork and technology are multiplying the power of people to serve GM customers.

GM

THE VISION IS PAYING OFF.

of show business from a gorilla's point of view.

The material is based on my eight-year romp through the world of moviemaking, weird ad campaigns, and exotic locations. My coverage begins in the snowbound San Bernardino Mountains, then moves to New York for a million-dollar ad campaign, and to the Cherry Hill shopping mall in New Jersey for a scandalous run-in with the "Disney on Parade" show. I then cover a wedding in Philadelphia, a rock-and-roll video circus in Boston, an ill-fated promotion in a Denver hotel, a steamy jungle-picture shooting in the outback of Puerto Rico, a riot in a ten-story Tokyo department store, and finally it's back to Burbank, California, where I star in a segment of Spielberg's *Amazing Stories*.

The events have been selected from my journal and are presented in chronological order. Each chapter is centered on a specific humorous or unusual event. I've written about my work in *Trading Places* and the famous American Tourister luggage campaign. But the heart of the material is the lesser events—the county fairs, the low-budget movie locations, and the shopping-mall promotions.

I've employed a variety of writing techniques to relate my adventures. First-person present-tense diary excerpts, past-tense remembrances, a short story, a prose poem, and letters.

I believe I've accurately portrayed myself as a socially aware Everyman, who just happens to be stuck in a state-of-the-art gorilla costume. I approach my gorilla occupation as a gonzo-journalist/actor/sleuth, with heat exhaustion as my visionary drug and a forty-pound anatomically correct ape suit as my cover. I'm usually hired to promote some capitalistic venture or to pad the pockets of some illiterate B-movie producer, but my real goal is to tap our primal concerns and bring in a live report from the field.

Gorilla Tales is a nonstop armchair adventure through sweltering jungles, rugged mountain terrain, used-car lots, cheap hotels, county fairs, airports, and shopping malls.

I plan to include four to six pages of action gorilla photos that I feel will add to the overall effectiveness of the book.

SUBSIDIARY RIGHTS

Gorilla Tales is a natural for a television series, a movie of the week, or a comedy feature film. I've discussed the idea at length with several producers. They've expressed strong interest and have asked me to submit a proposal. However, I feel I'd have a lot more bargaining power with a successfully published book to back the presentation.

I own the copyright to my gorilla suit (it's slightly different from the Tourister suit), so anything we might choose to do in the way of merchandising could be easily set up. The gorilla also has tremendous potential for calendars, greeting cards, and children's instructional video. Who knows—perhaps we're looking at another Kliban's cats or a Garfield.

DELIVERY AND FINAL COMMENTS

I should be able to complete the project in about six weeks. The final manuscript will run somewhere between 80,000 and 85,000 words. I believe the book screams for a humorous cover, which would enliven a display and help reflect the nature of the material. The sample cover is just an idea, but the gorilla could be brought to New York for a photo shoot, or I could arrange a session here in Los Angeles.

From here on, the proof is on the page.

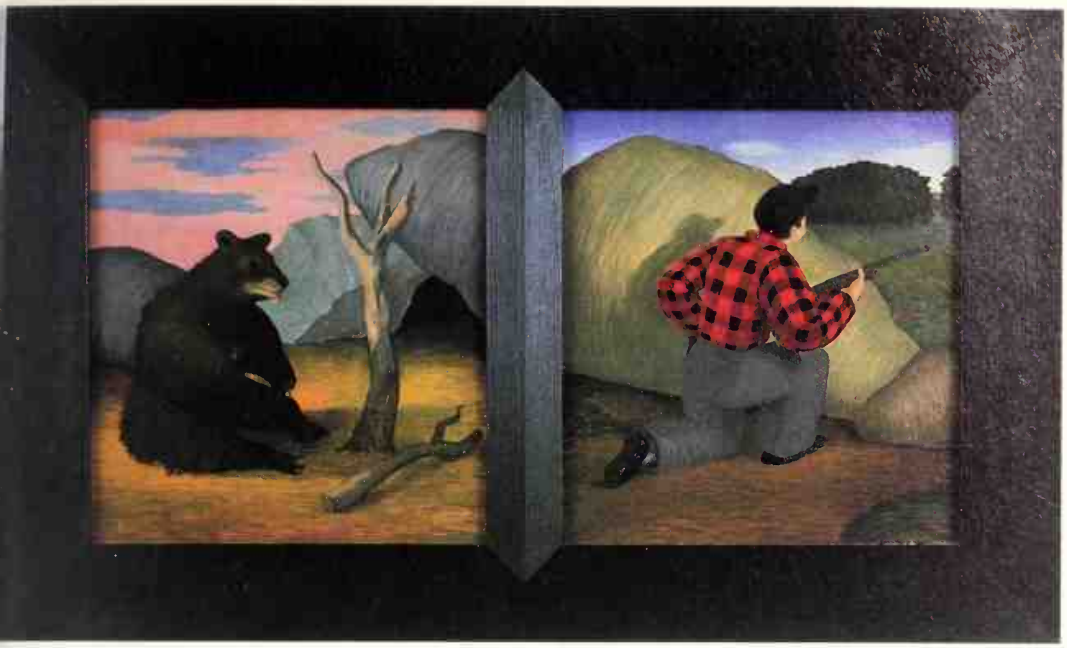
[Essay]

HUNTING IN EARNEST

From "Blood Sport," by Edward Abbey. The essay appears in Abbey's new collection, One Life at a Time, Please, *published this month by Henry Holt.*

I was born, bred, and raised on a farm in the Allegheny Mountains of Pennsylvania. A little sidehill farm in hardscrabble country, a land of marginal general farms, of submarginal specialized farms—our specialty was finding enough to eat without the shame of going on "The Relief," as we called it during the Great Depression. We lived in the hills, surrounded by scrubby third-growth forests, little coal-mining towns down in the valleys, and sulfur-colored creeks meandering among the corn patches. Few people could make a living from farming alone: my father, for example, supplemented what little we produced on the farm by occasional work in the mines, by driving a school bus, by a one-man logging business, by peddling subscriptions to a farmer's magazine, and by attending every private and public shooting match within fifty miles of home—he was an expert small-bore rifleman and a member, for several years running, of the Pennsylvania state rifle team; he still has a sashful of medals to show for those years. He almost always brought back from the matches a couple of chickens, sometimes a turkey, once a yearling pig.

None of this was quite enough, all together, to keep a family of seven in meat, all the time, through the frozen Appalachian winters. So he hunted. We all hunted. All of our neighbors hunted. Nearly every boy I knew had his own



Hunt, by Mark Dean, from "Contemporary Diptychs: Divided Visions," an exhibition last fall at the Whitney Museum of American Art at the Equitable Center in New York City.

rifle, and maybe a shotgun too, by the time he was twelve years old. As I did myself.

What did we hunt? Cottontail rabbit, first and foremost; we'd kill them, clean them, cut them up; my mother deep-fried them in bread crumbs and cooked and canned the surplus in Mason jars, as she did tomatoes, string beans, succotash, pork sausage, peaches, pears, sweet corn, everything else that would keep. We had no deep freeze; in fact, we had no electricity until the Rural Electrification Administration reached our neck of the woods in 1940.

So rabbit was almost a staple of our diet; fencerow chicken, we called it, as good and familiar to us as henyard chicken. My father seldom bothered with squirrel, but my brothers and I potted a few with our little Sears, Roebuck single-shot .22s, out among the great ancient white oaks and red oaks that were still standing in our woodlot. Squirrel meat can be good, but not so good as rabbit, and a squirrel is much harder to kill; we missed about ten for every one we hit.

Our only gamebird was the ringneck pheasant, rising with a thrilling rush from the corn stubble. My father bagged a few of those with his old taped-together double-barrel shotgun. Not many. He didn't like to hunt with a shotgun. Wasteful, he thought, and the shells were too expensive, and besides, he disliked chewing on lead pellets. The shotgun was primarily a weapon (though never needed) for home defense. Most of the time he shot rabbits with his target rifle, a massive magazine-loaded .22 with a peep sight. Shot them sitting.

Was that legal? Probably not. I don't remember. But he had a good eye. And he was a hunter—not a sportsman. He hunted for a purpose: to put meat on the table.

My father usually bought a license for deer, when he could afford it, but only because the penalty for getting caught with an untagged deer would have been a small financial catastrophe. In any case, with or without a license, he always killed his deer on the evening before opening day, while those red-coated fellows from the towns and cities were busy setting up their elaborate camps along the back roads, stirring the deer into movement. My father was not a stickler for strict legality, and he believed, as most country men did, that fear tainted the meat and therefore it was better to get your deer before the chase, the gunnery—The Terror—began. We liked our venison poached. (As a result I find that after these many years I retain more admiration and respect for the honest serious poacher than I do or ever could for the so-called gentleman hunter.)

My old man practiced what we called "still hunting." On the day before opening, about noon, when the deer were bedded down for their midday siesta, he'd go out with his gun, his cornfodder-tan canvas coat with its many big pockets, and his coal miner's oval-shaped lunch

bucket full of hot coffee and sandwiches and mother's stewed-raisin cookies, and he'd pick a familiar spot along one of the half-dozen game paths in our neighborhood, settle down in the brush with his back to a comfortable tree, and wait. And keep on waiting, sometimes into the long autumn twilight, until at last the first somewhat nervous, always uneasy deer appeared. Doe or buck—he always shot whatever came first. You can't eat antlers, he pointed out.

Usually he shot his deer with a "punkin ball" from the battered, dangerous, taped-up shotgun. But at least once, as I recall, he dropped a doe with his target rifle, like a rabbit. Drilled her right between the eyes with a neat little .22-caliber long-rifle bullet. Those deer slugs for the shotgun were expensive.

Then he'd drag the deer into the brush, out of sight, and wait some more, to see if anyone had noticed the shot. When nothing happened, he hung the deer to the nearest tree limb, dressed it out, ate the liver for supper. If he had a license, he would wait through the night, tag the deer, and take it home by wheel first thing in the morning. If not, he slung the carcass over his shoulders and toted it home through the woods and over the hills in the dark. He was a strong, large, and resolute sort of man then, with a wife and five children to feed. Nowadays, getting on a bit—he was born in 1901—he is still oversize, for an old man, but not so strong physically. Nor so resolute. He works only four or five hours a day, alone, out in the woods, cutting down trees, and then quits. He gave up deer hunting thirty years ago.

Why? "Well," he explains, "we don't need the meat anymore."

Now that was how my brothers and I learned about hunting. My brothers still like to go out for deer now and then, but it's road hunting, with good companions, not "still hunting." I wonder if anybody hunts in that fashion these days. I did a lot of deer hunting in New Mexico from 1947 through the 1950s, when I was living on seasonal jobs with the Park Service and Forest Service, often married, trying to write books. As my father had taught me, I usually went out on the day before opening. Much safer then, for one thing, before those orange-vested hordes were turned loose over the landscape, shooting at everything that moves.

Gradually, from year to year, my interest in hunting, as a sport, waned away to nothing. I began to realize that what I liked best about hunting was the companionship of a few good trusted male buddies in the out-of-doors. Anything, any excuse, to get out into the hills, away from the crowds, to live, if only for a few days, beyond the wall. That was the point of hunting.

So why lug a ten-pound gun along? I began leaving my rifle in the truck. Then I left it at home. The last time I looked down the bore of that old piece there was a spider living there.

"We don't need the meat anymore," says my old man. And I say, Let the mountain lions have those deer; they need the meat more than I do. Let the Indians have it, or hungry college students, or unpublished writers, or anyone else trying to get by on welfare, food stamps, and hope. When the money began arriving from New York by airmail, those checks with my name on them, like manna from heaven, I gave up hunting deer. I had no need. Every time you eat a cow, I tell myself, you are saving the life of an elk, or two mule deer, or about two dozen javelina. Let those wild creatures live. Let being be, said Martin Heidegger. Of course, they're going to perish anyway, I know, whether by lion or wolf or starvation or disease—but so are we.

Henry David Thoreau, notorious nature lover, was also a hunter and fisherman, on occasion. And among the many things that Thoreau wrote on the matter was this, from *Walden:*

> No humane being, past the thoughtless age of boyhood, will wantonly murder any creature which holds its life by the same tenure he does. The hare in its extremity cries like a child. I warn you, mothers, that my sympathies do not make the usual *philanthropic* distinctions. . . . But I see that if I were to live in a wilderness, I should become . . . a fisher and hunter in earnest.

In earnest. There lies the key to the ethical issue. Earnestness. Purpose. The killing is justified by the need and must be done in a spirit of respect, reverence, gratitude. Otherwise hunting sinks to the level of mere fun, "harvesting animals," *divertissement,* sadism, or sport. *Sport!*

Where did the ugly term "harvesting" come from? To speak of "harvesting" other living creatures, whether deer or elk or birds or cottontail rabbits, as if they were no more than a crop, exposes the meanest, cruelest, most narrow and homocentric of possible attitudes toward the life that surrounds us. The word reveals the pervasive influence of utilitarian economics on the modern mind. Such doctrine insults and violates both humanity and life; and humanity will be, already is, the victim of it.

Now I have railed against the sportsman hunter long enough. I wished only to explain why first my father and then I have given up hunting, for the time being. When times get hard again, as they surely will, when my family and kin need meat on the table, I shall not hesitate to take that old carbine down from the wall and ramrod that spider out of the barrel and wander back once more into the hills. ■

HEARING NOTHING, SAYING NOTHING

At least once every decade the United States suffers a crisis requiring a congressional hearing to redeem its lost innocence and repair the damage done to its Constitution. The Fulbright hearings in the 1960s explored the president's authority to make war, and in the 1970s the Watergate hearings sought to constrain the powers of a president who would be king.

The Iran-*contra* investigation of 1987 questioned the legitimacy of a foreign policy based on "secrecy, deception, and disdain for the law." Yet the twenty-six members of Congress who investigated the Iran-*contra* affair remained oddly apathetic. On most days they looked like affluent mourners at a cheap funeral, hurrying uneasily through the required formalities.

What was the real purpose of this investigation, and why did it arouse so little indignation from both the public and its representatives? With these questions in mind, *Harper's Magazine* invited five students of the investigation to read the Iran-*contra* report—690 pages of narrative, footnotes, and supplemental statements. They seek not to engage in a political debate but to explicate a government text.

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Reviewing the Book

LEWIS LAPHAM: On November 18, 1987, the House and Senate select committees issued their *Report of the Congressional Committees Investigating the Iran-Contra Affair*. Despite its remarkably strong language about President Reagan's repeated lying to the American people and his unwillingness to "take care that the law reigned supreme," the report received little more than perfunctory acknowledgment. The White House dismissed the document as a stale repetition. For the most part, the nation's columnists gratefully concurred. After a day of obligatory headlines, news of the report vanished as abruptly as an April snowfall.

It's not inconceivable that this was the effect that the committees intended. Certainly the members understood that there was no audience for bad news, no constituency eager to force the burden of constitutional questions on an administration already weak with indecision and sick with scandal.

Lacking any political motive for inciting anybody to urgent action, the committees dressed their judgment in the rhetoric of sorrow rather than anger. The opening sentence establishes a tone of wistful regret: "The full story of the Iran-Contra Affair is complicated, and for this Nation, profoundly sad." The report concludes with an affirmation of faith in the status quo and the hope that the next time the White House sets out to violate the law it will inform the Congress of its travel plans.

LESLIE COCKBURN: Having read the 690 pages, I can say that much has been overlooked. The executive summary does state that the administration violated the Constitution. And the committees astutely followed the money trail of Richard Secord, Albert Hakim, and other profiteers. They traced $269,000 to Secord's personal bank account: some of that money was used for a personal aircraft, a $32,000 Porsche, and a $3,000 stay at a health farm.

Thanks to the Hakim ledger, the report lays out Secord and Hakim's plans to set aside over $2 million for personal business ventures in timberland, machine-gun manufacture, and the production of opium alkaloids.

But aside from that, there is no stunning information in this report.

SAM DASH: This report is better than the hearings because it provides context. But it frequently quotes books, newspaper reports, and unpublished testimony never discussed in the hearings. So the public never *learned* many of the very facts that make this report coherent.

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than the hearings is that reports are always more coherent. Reports are reflections in the evening after the heat of the day has passed.

JOE CONASON: I have to disagree. Reading this report, you would not know who Richard Secord is compared to John Doe or John Singlaub or even Bill Casey. Without *that* context, this report is rendered meaningless.

Secord is identified as a retired air-force major general. But the report fails to mention that Secord was *denied* CIA clearance because of his once close connection with jailed CIA agent Edwin Wilson. Secord's relationship with Hakim began under Wilson's tutelage in the corrupt arms bazaar of the Shah's Iran. But to discuss their relationship would have led the inquiry down the sewers of the intelligence community. The committees didn't want to go there.

John Singlaub is described only as a retired army major general. That's like calling the Godfather a "plumbing salesman" because that's what his official resume says. Singlaub's organization, the World Anti-Communist League, is ignored. Is it merely a coincidence that the authoritarian rightist governments involved in the *contra* supply operation—South Korea, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, Guatemala—are the leaders and funders of WACL? Or that the private contributors—Ellen Garwood, Joe Coors, and Nelson Bunker Hunt—are all major WACL contributors?

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But the documents show that North was running this war openly within the administration—as if he were mowing his lawn. He was blatantly telling Adolfo Calero and Enrique Bermudez what to do and where to go. He was getting intelligence information from the Pentagon and regularly informing such senior people as then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John Vessey. People at the FBI were on call when North needed them and ever willing to show him their reports on his operation.

The documents reveal that this scandal was much *broader* than the report indicates.

DASH: I agree. While setting out the context of the affair, the report neglects a lot of information available to the committees. The Watergate report did contain all the relevant documents. I would like to have seen such thorough documentation in this report.

WALTER KARP: The thing that the report does beautifully is to erect a Chinese Wall between the President and his advisers. The report holds that a president's *ignorance* of what his closest advisers do in pursuit of his avowed policy is to be assumed unless there is—I quote—"direct evidence" of personal participation in a crime. That is an invitation to criminal government in the future.

SCHORR: I'm sorry. You read a different report from the one I read. There's no Chinese Wall here. The committees didn't say the President was innocent. They said they had no evidence that the President knew about the diversion of funds—which was true. They also said that the diversion happened in a climate created by the President. The President gave two orders: to keep the *contras* alive and to sell arms to Iran. All that is rather superbly documented in this report.

LAPHAM: Maybe the authors of the Iran-*contra* report intended an effect as obscure as a Chinese metaphor, or maybe they were trying to hide their conclusions in plain sight—like Edgar Allan Poe's purloined letter.

KARP: The report fails even to amass its own evidence, which, in fact, is considerable. It's there, only it's scattered throughout the 690 pages. It's as if they expected us to be readers of the Kabbalah, scholiasts who gloss the minutiae of some dense medieval scripture so that the larger conclusions can be drawn by others.

Laced throughout this report are interesting nuggets. For example, in chapter 7, page 149, the report builds to a very specific question: What did the President know about clandestine "support" for the *contras*? You won't find the answer there. But on page 36 it says, "Relatively minor operational details were given to the President" during 1983–84.

What "minor details"? On November 4, 1983, the report tells us that the President approved an increase in the number of weapons to the *contras* by 3,000—a measly amount. So he knew about small arms shipments.

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This is Bud McFarlane's testimony, clearly

telling us that Ronald Reagan, the President of the United States, is personally making phone calls about shipments of arms for the *contras*.

Then Vice Adm. John Poindexter admitted briefing the President about the Santa Elena airstrip in Costa Rica, which would be used to resupply the *contras*. That's on page 64.

In fact, it's incredible how much Reagan did know. But we are to believe that he was kept abreast *only* until October 1984, before he raised private money and before the second Boland Amendment. That is, until knowing about it became an impeachable offense.

Then, on page 149, the Kabbalah reader finally arrives at the big question: Did the President know about "providing such support"?

A Selected Chronology

NOVEMBER 2, 1986—President Reagan announces the release of hostage David Jacobsen, crediting "a number of sensitive channels."

NOVEMBER 3—Reagan publicly reaffirms his policy that he will make no concessions to kidnappers for the release of hostages. The same day, the Lebanese magazine *Al Shiraa* alleges that America sent arms to Iran and that Robert McFarlane had actually visited Iran.

NOVEMBER 6—Reagan denies both the arms story and the account of McFarlane's trip.

NOVEMBER 13—Reagan admits that the United States sent arms, but only "small amounts of defensive weapons and spare parts" that would fit aboard a single cargo plane. He concludes: "We did not, repeat did not, trade weapons or anything else for hostages, nor will we."

NOVEMBER 19—In a press conference, Reagan denies the participation of a third country in the affair. Twenty minutes later the White House issues a retraction.

NOVEMBER 21—Attorney General Ed Meese assembles an investigative team: no criminal investigators are included. Later that evening, from 6:30 to 7:30, Oliver North and Fawn Hall destroy a "mammoth" amount of documents.

NOVEMBER 22—In NSC files, Meese's staff discovers a diversion memo that links the Iran arms sale to *contra* aid. Meese neglects to inform the FBI.

NOVEMBER 25—Reagan says he "was not fully informed." Poindexter quits; North is fired. White House documents are finally secured.

NOVEMBER 26—Meese calls in the FBI. Reagan appoints the Tower commission.

NOVEMBER 27—North is denied entry to the White House.

NOVEMBER 30—Reagan publicly declares North a "national hero."

DECEMBER 6—Reagan admits, "Mistakes were made," and insists the initiative has ended. Nevertheless, in Europe the same day, American officials discuss the matter with Iranians.

JANUARY 6–7, 1987—The House and Senate form committees to investigate the affair.

JANUARY 27—Reagan admits, "*Serious* mistakes were made."

FEBRUARY 4—The Tower commission asks President Reagan, as commander in chief, to order Poindexter and North to testify.

FEBRUARY 6—In a letter, Reagan's counsel responds that the President wants Poindexter and North to "cooperate fully," yet he recognizes their constitutional right not to testify.

FEBRUARY 26—The Tower commission issues its report, blaming only top administrative officials.

MARCH 4—Switching from the passive to the active voice, Reagan admits that the arms-for-hostages deal "was a mistake."

MARCH 14—Reagan now says, "I was wrong."

MARCH 19—Reagan announces, "I would not go down that road again."

MAY 5—The Iran-*contra* hearings begin.

MAY 15—In a sharp departure from previous statements, Reagan declares he was "definitely involved" in aiding the *contras*. "It was my idea to begin with," he says.

JULY 7—North testifies.

JULY 15—Poindexter testifies.

AUGUST 3—The hearings end.

NOVEMBER 18—The select committees issue their report.

—*adapted from* The Chronology,
compiled by the National Security Archives

That is funding a private war from a privy purse—something which even *kings* are not allowed to do anymore. In a mere 350 words, the report concludes: "These committees found no evidence suggesting that the President was a knowing participant in the effort to deceive Congress and the American public. But the President's actions and statements contributed to the deception."

In other words, Congress has provided the people lots of little bits of information, scattered them throughout a lengthy text, narrated the story poorly, whispered the climactic questions, and then, ignoring most of the material they gathered, concluded nothing.

SCHORR: What really emerges from this report is the picture of a President who doesn't want to know *all* the details of the things that he has ordered. He sits there and dreams. He dreams about freedom fighters. He dreams that in Nicaragua—and in Angola and in Afghanistan—there are these people, anti-communist freedom fighters. Boy, you could make a really great movie about these guerrillas who selflessly fight for freedom against the Soviet horror. And he says, "I think Congress is wrong to say we can't arm them. I want them kept alive." So McFarlane and Poindexter say, "Aye, aye, sir." And Casey says, "Boss, leave it to me. In the Office of Strategic Services during World War II, we knew how to do those things." So Bill Casey is a man who can turn a President's idle daydream into a self-sustaining NSC enterprise free of the entanglements of Congress.

COCKBURN: I think it's a wonderful story that we've just heard, but it doesn't square with the document. You assume, as does the report, that the CIA hierarchy demurred, saying, "We can't do that," and let the NSC run the operation. But that's another deception generated by the narrowness of the report. The CIA actually *used* Ollie North and the NSC as a good cover. Look at the people who were involved: Bill Casey, Clair George, Alan Fiers, Joe Fernandez, Duane Clarridge, and at least three key operatives in the field—all CIA. You had a complete chain of command *inside* the agency.

It was not as though Fernandez, the station chief in Costa Rica, was sneaking around Fiers, his task-force chief, when he set about creating a new *contra* force on the southern front. None of the agency people were rogues.

KARP: Much was left out and I don't think it's an accident. You must attribute intentions to men's actions, otherwise, we live in a completely lunatic world.

If you go into a hardware store and the guy behind the counter cheats you, you don't say, "Mistakes were made" or "He didn't have the right leadership" or "It's a failure of proper management." No, you say, "That son of a bitch is a crook." That's what you say. Men intend the consequences of their actions.

SCHORR: You assume someone got away with something—that it was a success. But it was the Keystone Kops. Nothing succeeded. They traded arms to Iran for hostages, but the number of hostages stayed basically the same. They sought a moderate Iranian policy; they got a war in the Persian Gulf. They wanted to keep the *contras* alive; they're about to be axed.

I don't know what *kind* of conspiracy it is when nothing about it worked. Now we have a report *cited* in order to prove that the report doesn't contain the information.

The President's men did these dumb, stupid, illegal things. They were caught at them and accomplished nothing. They destroyed one of the most popular presidencies in history and flushed it down the drain.

The real result of this report is the same as the result of the entire Iran-*contra* affair. Both left the President standing alone, looking like an idiot, anxious for his term to end.

DASH: I think we are ignoring the real reason why the report does not fully inform the public. The report's good features stem from the nature of a *written* report. The report pulls together a lot of the evidence—certainly not all of it—in a coherent narrative. But the report's failure to inform the public stems from the fact that it is a product of the hearings, which were flawed. If you want to uncover why the report fails, you have to go back to the hearings.

Taking the Fall

LAPHAM: As with the Watergate investigations, the public memory of the Iran-*contra* affair derives from the public hearings. Everything about Sen. Sam Ervin attested to his fierce devotion to the rule of law. Ervin *looked* like a Founding Father, and he sounded like one when he proclaimed the Constitution the "most precious possession of the American people."

The Iran-*contra* hearings failed to provide an equivalent figure. The members of the committees looked like frightened clerks. They were cowed by their own witnesses, bullied by the military officials, and insulted by the arms merchants. None of the politicians could match the eloquence of Lt. Col. Oliver North; none of them looked as convincing to the television cameras; none gave dramatic life to the princi-

ples at risk. It was as if they had been put in charge of a mechanism that they were too timid to work. Why was this so?

DASH: These hearings were predestined to fail—to provoke no public outrage—because the hearings had no strategy. They never told a story, never explained to the people what happened. The committees set an unworkable deadline and called too few witnesses; then Congress vanished from the stage before it had even established what had happened.

KARP: The investigation was flawed from the beginning. Try to remember November 30, 1986, a Sunday, a busy day of messages. Sen. Robert Dole was on television saying, "It's not going to go away." He called for a special investigation. So Congress agreed.

The *New York Times* called various people for their reactions. Sen. Sam Nunn said, "We must help the President restore his credibility." Rep. Les Aspin said, "Keep it narrow." Sen. Robert Byrd said, "This is my President. He's in trouble and I don't want to see the presidency damaged." Everybody agreed to an investigation tightly controlled by the congressional leadership. They said it would be a waste of time for a lot of different subcommittees to take pieces out of the Reagan administration, like sharks taking chunks out of an old sperm whale. From November 30 until this day, you have not heard one public man give one noble public utterance about the significance of lawless government and conducting a private war with a privy purse.

CONASON: The problem was that no one on the committees had the force of conviction to oppose the *purpose* of these activities—namely, to get the United States involved in a war in Central America. The committees seemed constructed specifically to avoid any outspoken opposition to *contra* aid. There were people who had a much tougher stance—such as Senator Kerry from Massachusetts—who were intentionally kept off the committees.

Of the eleven members from the Senate, eight favored *contra* aid. Of the fifteen members from the House—where aid has been consistently opposed by a majority—nine were *contra* supporters. That's about a two-thirds majority in favor of aid, quite a distortion of congressional sentiment and of national opinion on this issue. Emulating the witnesses, the Republicans seized every chance to make partisan speeches about the Red menace, while the *contra* opponents stuck decorously to the rules forbidding such political grandstanding and looked foolish. Nobody said bluntly that this *contra* conspiracy was wrong because it violated the will of the American people.

DASH: The main flaw was the instructions to the chief counsel. The committees decided to end the hearings by August. Why? Because Congress was frightened that if it lingered too long, there would be a backlash due to Reagan's popularity. The instructions to counsel were not to go too far afield. So the committees limited the number of witnesses.

Arthur Liman saw his role differently than I did in 1974. He thought of himself as counsel to a *client*, in the manner of a lawyer representing a corporation. So he says, in effect, "What the Senate wants, that's what I give them." I think he should have said, "I want to hire my own staff without interference. I want to carry this investigation as far as it goes." That's what I demanded as chief counsel to the Watergate committee, and Senator Ervin agreed. He said I wouldn't be good as the counsel unless I insisted on that condition. If the committees don't like that, you don't take the job.

CONASON: Where the administration really erred in the committees' view was to ignore Congress. The administration failed to deal Congress in: it didn't talk to Congress often enough and it told lies. The hearings were a message to the President—cut us in next time.

SCHORR: I think we forget too soon what was in the hearings. All the things that you say were omitted, ignored, and neglected were *all* said.

The problem stems from the nature of committees in general. Here are twenty-six members of Congress, each with his own political agenda. Moreover, the two chambers of Congress are not accustomed to working together. On top of that, you have the two parties and two different counsels—majority and minority. So the difficulties mount geometrically. Anything that anybody wanted to deduce from these hearings was there. The facts may have been neglected by the American people, but that's a familiar phenomenon.

COCKBURN: The hearings were very circumscribed. They left out all the areas where laws were flagrantly broken.

Arms were shipped out of South Florida. Hard evidence exists of a six-ton arms shipment in March 1985 to John Hull's farm in Costa Rica, a staging area for Oliver North's war. That's a violation of the law.

Mercenaries were recruited in the United States, trained in Central America, and sent to *contra* camps to fight. On the southern front, Americans were running at least two of North's

camps. And they used Miami Cubans as *contras*. That's a violation of the Neutrality Act.

Deals were made with major drug traffickers in Miami, funds were solicited, and pilots and planes were shipped to the *contras* in Miami. George Morales, a cocaine trafficker, says he donated $3 million in cash and some aircraft, as well as his top pilots, at the request of a CIA operative, Octaviano Cesar, in Costa Rica. That's a violation of an entire raft of laws, including the Neutrality Act and racketeering statutes.

None of these issues came up in the hearings. Such information is "not for the children to hear"; that's only for discussion behind closed doors. The rich warp and woof of this scandal never came out in this gentlemen's forum.

DASH: Dan's right that facts were raised in the hearings. But just because they were raised doesn't mean the facts were communicated to the public. Informing the public is an *art form*. Congress has to determine first *what* facts should be developed and *how* they're going to convey them to the American people. The committees may have raised all the facts and issues, but the information was scattered.

The public watches television and is trained to follow stories. You've got to tell them a story that's dramatic and interesting. Then you've got to repeat it and emphasize it.

There must be an effort to educate the public on how government should operate in the first place. We needed to learn what the National Security Council is. Who are these people? How do they fit into the structure of government? What's their relationship to the president? You can't assume the public knows this.

Instead the committees' first witness was Richard Secord, who doesn't figure in until the middle of the story and who provided no context. Then there were throwaway witnesses and myriad comments on the Constitution. The confusion started at the beginning.

Liman explains this by arguing that the committees did not have to give the background or context of the scandal because the public had learned it in the Tower commission report. But who read the Tower report? A congressional committee should never assume the public knows any of the facts.

CONASON: Another reason for failure is that this unwieldy committee was composed of members from the judiciary, intelligence, and foreign-relations committees. They were attempting to do in a few weeks the work they had failed to do during the previous three years. They should have been investigating long ago the stories reported about Oliver North. They let a policy dispute degenerate into criminal activity and fester into a constitutional crisis.

COCKBURN: Part of the failure was the manner in which the hearings were run. There was a great moment when Congressman Jack Brooks asked North why he had a plan to suspend the Constitution. North's plan allowed the government to jail whomever it wanted in the event of a war. Well, the gavel came down and Chairman Inouye said, "We'll talk about that in executive session." To suspend the Constitution is certainly a constitutional issue, but the committee decided "this is not for the children to hear."

CONASON: Another problem, Leslie, was the staff selection. Consider Thomas Polgar. A thirty-five-year veteran of the CIA, he was hired as an "intelligence / foreign-policy analyst," and he was one of only two on the staff. Before Polgar was officially hired, he said, in effect, "We're not going to have another Church committee investigation." In other words, we're not going to hurt the CIA or try to stop illegal covert activities. His boss at the CIA had been Theodore Shackley, a major figure in the earliest part of the Iran-*contra* affair. So Polgar was a guy with institutional *and* personal ties to the principals in the scandal. Is there any question that such staffing had an effect on the investigation?

The trouble is, Arthur Liman thought of himself as counsel to a client, in the manner of a lawyer representing a corporation

DASH: In Watergate we had former FBI agents seeking jobs on the committee. Since we were investigating the FBI's involvement in the cover-up, we wouldn't hire any of them. We didn't even hire people with police experience.

Ordinarily it's bad judgment to hire anybody in an investigation who has such ties. It's a conflict of interest. I say this as a general proposition without meaning to be critical of Polgar, who may be a good investigator.

COCKBURN: I should tell one anecdote about Polgar. He went to interview Eden Pastora, the former *contra* commander. He arrived at Pastora's

house with staff from the American embassy who were deeply involved with North's operation. By the end of the interview Pastora was so convinced that Polgar was *not* from the joint committees, he called a number of people. "Was that guy really from the Senate?" he asked. "He didn't ask me anything, all he wanted to talk about was the weather."

DASH: The responsibility is the chief counsel's. If I had been Arthur Liman, and the committees said, "Take this thirty-five-year veteran of the CIA because he'll do a good job," I would have talked to Inouye. I would have said that I didn't want him, not because of anything relating to Polgar personally, but because I believe it's poor policy to hire anybody with such ties. If Inouye told me I had to take him, I would have quit.

What Congress really feared was that to expose the truth would goad half the country to reach for Reagan's throat

LAPHAM: But why did Liman and the committees tolerate so many obstacles to their investigation? Were they naive or merely incompetent?

KARP: Neither. What they really feared was that, on signal, half the country would reach for the President's throat. They were trying to *protect* the President. Shysters and sharks were running our foreign policy, and this has been going on for seven years. The committees sought the public's condemnation of lawlessness, but they wanted to save the President at the same time. That's like trying to cut a coin in half to get only one side. It's a hard operation. *That's* why there is such a difference between the hearings and the report.

For example, the report says, "The covert program of support for the Contras evaded the Constitution's most significant check on executive power"—the power of the purse. If you heard something vaguely like that on television, there would have been no backlash. There would have been serious thought about what the President had been doing for several years—serious thoughts that the politicians are happy Americans do not entertain. And they don't.

SCHORR: Part of the committees' problem is that the public takes yesterday's news for granted. People absorb yesterday's sensations and then ask, "What's new?" When you hold committee hearings, the important thing is to develop something which has not been known before, a brand-new sensation.

In Watergate, Alexander Butterfield, the White House aide, electrified the hearings when he reported that Nixon had taped all his conversations. That revelation created a new dimension, which led to Nixon's resignation.

In this case, we already knew that the administration had raised money for the *contras* by selling arms to Iran. We knew that because Ed Meese told us in November 1986. So the essential elements in the case were known before the hearings started.

Then the White House succeeded in focusing attention on the one issue they could afford to debate publicly: Did the President know about the diversion of funds?

Congress needed a smoking gun—evidence so dramatic that the investigation would enter a new phase. They didn't fulfill the requirement that on television you have to see something and say, "My God, I never knew that!"

KARP: No, Congress didn't have a smoking gun, but they also didn't have a copy of the Constitution, apparently. Not once in the hearings did anyone use the words, "take care that the laws be faithfully executed." The interesting thing is how daring the committees were in the report, which is merely *read*. The words "take care" appear there, and the report concludes that Ronald Reagan broke his fundamental promise to the American people.

And I think that was the intention of the report. When the people are paying attention, they're *not* told certain things. When only a small number of people are paying attention, other things can be said. The difference between what the committee decided to keep from us—the people—and the report they wrote is the difference between what they wanted Americans to know and not to know.

I think, Dan, the idea that there was nothing to be discovered is only half right. Hearings can also confirm the people's suspicions. The public suspected that crimes were committed, but no one confirmed that. So the people are left with canker sores and rotting suspicions.

For example, the person with the most obvious knowledge of what Reagan knew was McFarlane. Half a dozen times McFarlane said, "I spoke to the President about the NSC role with the *contras*." And the viewer thought, "This is it! We're now defining what the Presi-

dent knew, right?" But Inouye just changed the subject. Boland did it; Rudman did it; everybody did it. They returned to questions like, "What did Adnan Khashoggi say?" When asked about such glaring gaps, Inouye said, "The President is not a target of this investigation." What is that but an effort to *spare* the President?

SCHORR: You ask too much of televised hearings. Televised hearings have a dynamic all their own. You are dealing with politicians faced with witnesses who are well prepared, as Meese was. (You can forgive Meese for forgetting details with all the grand juries he's testified before lately. He can't be expected to remember these minor acts for which he won't be indicted.)

If, like Colonel North, you manage by forensic display, by a lot of medals on your chest, by the evocation of family and patriotism, and by your anti-communist convictions, to elicit some kind of sympathy—politicians don't want to stand up to that. Politicians want a witness who looks bad on television, then they'll go after him.

This time they were dealing with experts in the manipulations of the media. Meese was superbly prepared. North didn't need to be prepared because—in his manic way—he lives *only* on television.

We forget the way in which a witness sits there before an impressive array of power. The camera shows you looking up and the committees are looking down at you, and you're held in judgment. You've got enormous sympathy even before you are five minutes into your testimony.

DASH: All that, Dan, is quite true. Counsel has to watch how he behaves. If he goes for the jugular vein, he looks like a Nazi persecutor rather than an objective lawyer.

The dynamics of a congressional investigation should not depend, however, on what members of Congress do at the hearing. They shouldn't *conduct* the investigation. The initial responsibility lies with the staff and counsel. The committees come in afterward.

North became a hero, not only because he played well on television, but because he had the whole football field to himself. North should not have been allowed to testify without counsel learning first what his answers were going to be. North's attorney, Brendan Sullivan, gambled and said to the committees, "I'm not going to come into executive session and give you answers," and the committees caved in.

They didn't have to be frightened of North. He wanted to testify more than they wanted him to. Remember, he had been characterized as corrupt and as a loose cannon. He *wanted* to talk. All Liman had to do, when Sullivan said no, was turn his back and say, "Then we don't put him on." Sullivan and North would have run after Liman and pleaded to testify. But Liman was under instructions by the committees. "Don't do anything that will lose North. August is coming up, and we don't want to be in session." They set a deadline, and Sullivan played it to the hilt.

Also, Sullivan stole the show from the committees with his constant biting and, at times,

The Meese Inquiry

Mr. Meese's November 21–25, 1986, inquiry was the focus of considerable attention by Committee Members during our public hearings. For this inquiry—a task ordered by the President—Mr. Meese chose to use friends and political allies rather than experienced career investigators and staff members of the Department's Office of Intelligence Policy and Review. . . . Mr. Meese failed to utilize the FBI and to take steps to preserve relevant documents. In fact, Justice Department officials did not even review all the materials made available to them in NSC offices during the key weekend. Mr. Meese informed senior White House officials a day in advance of the impending document review and immediately thereafter they destroyed relevant files. . . .

Mr. Meese's essential response to these criticisms was that he was not conducting a criminal investigation as the Attorney General, but a "fact-finding inquiry" as an "adviser to the President." Moreover, he stated, he had no basis on which to believe there were any criminal violations involved. We do not believe that the factual record supports these assertions.

Mr. Meese cannot avoid his responsibilities as Attorney General simply by calling himself something else. He is the Attorney General. He was nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate for that job. Mr. Meese's role as adviser to the President is not separate from that as Attorney General—it is derived from it. He remained the Attorney General while he was conducting his inquiry for the President. And it was necessary for those who were the subjects of his inquiry to understand that they had an obligation to tell him the truth, precisely because he was acting as the chief law-enforcement officer of the country. To the extent he conveyed a different impression, he served neither the President nor his office well.

—*from* The Report of the Congressional Committees Investigating the Iran-Contra Affair

rude challenges to the committees and counsel. Under the committees' rules, the chairman had the power to shut Sullivan up, but their efforts were ineffective. I cannot help but imagine with what humor and impact Senator Ervin would have been able to control such outbursts.

COCKBURN: But even without the executive session beforehand, they had plenty of documents. For example, when North said, "I did it for the *contras*, for the cause, because I'm a patriot," then a congressman could have said, "Fine, colonel. Let's look at this memo sent to you by Rob Owen, your man in the field. It has words to the effect that your chief comandante is an alcoholic surrounded by drug traffickers, all of whom are stealing money from the U.S. government. Is that patriotic?" Now these memos, these damning memos that all the journalists saw, were not talked about in the hearings. Why not?

DASH: The senators were afraid, Leslie. We had the same problem in Watergate. I had senators constantly saying to Senator Ervin, "Let's get off the stage. There's going to be a backlash." Ervin said, "We're conducting public hearings to tell the public the facts. As long as it takes, we're going to stay on." The senators said they didn't want to bore the American public, but that's nonsense. The public doesn't get bored when they're watching interesting hearings.

SCHORR: Sam, the question—how long should the hearings take—is a prosecutor's question. It's not a politician's question. A politician asks how long can he get enough exposure to make it look as though he's doing a great job before the people grow tired and the politicians wonder, "Why don't we go on vacation?"

DASH: Fine. During Watergate we had similar pressure, but Ervin didn't ask that question. We went much beyond the period of time the Iran-*contra* committees allotted to themselves. And when we were finally cut off because the stage would soon be occupied by the impeachment committee and the special prosecutor, we had already alerted the public to the facts.

KARP: These committees didn't have the guts of the Watergate committee. Even when Inouye and company had an easy victory tossed to them, they looked the other way. Think back to May 15, 1987: the White House thought the jig was up, that they could no longer deny that the President did not know his people were running a *contra* war. So the President said he was "definitely involved," and that "it was my idea to begin with." Suddenly the body politic inside the beltway goes, "Uhh! The idiot!" The *Times* ran an op-ed article by Lawrence Tribe saying, "The President just started a constitutional crisis." But what happened instead was that everyone said, "Let's pretend he never said that." The hearings were in recess at the time. And when they resumed, the headline of the *Times* asked, "What did Reagan know?" They simply returned to the original question, as if May 15 had never happened.

DASH: Yes, but the White House managed to narrow the question to whether the President knew about the diversion.

CONASON: But the President admitted that he knew the NSC was carrying on a private war.

DASH: You raise an interesting point. What about the activities that Reagan admitted? What should the committees have done about the private war in Central America and the illegal sale of arms to Iran—two serious violations that the President happily admitted to?

Invoking the Instrument of Last Resort

LAPHAM: During the whole of the Iran-*contra* investigation nobody mentioned the word, "impeachment." Why not? Did President Reagan commit "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors"? Could the President have been impeached?

Impeachment simply means indictment. The House of Representatives has the sole power to present the articles of impeachment, and then the Chief Justice of the United States presides over a trial conducted by the Senate. The Senate must then vote a two-thirds majority to find the President guilty.

Although rarely invoked, impeachment is a fire ax hanging on the wall of Congress. At the Constitutional Convention in 1787, some of the delegates argued that impeachment was unnecessary because elections provided the means to rid the republic of misrule. Benjamin Franklin recommended the device of impeachment as a useful vent through which to discharge fierce popular discontent. Otherwise, Franklin said, the people would have to resort to the only other known means of removal—assassination.

Apparently no one found the confused impulse toward autocracy within Reagan's White House cause for sufficient alarm. Maybe the times have changed since Richard Nixon was nearly impeached. Is it because the public assumes that politicians will steal and lie, or is it because people think that the world has become

such a dangerous place that only scoundrels can guarantee the safety of a democratic republic?

SCHORR: Impeachment of a President is a political act. The President can be impeached whenever Congress decides that he is guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors.

DASH: The phrase "high crimes and misdemeanors" does not really mean crimes. The House Judiciary Committee can define an impeachable offense as *not* requiring any violation of a criminal statute. They can define it simply as wrongful conduct involving a serious breach of trust in office—like failing to carry out the constitutional requirement that the President should see that the laws are faithfully executed.

This latitude of definition is consistent with the intentions of the Framers who adopted the tradition of impeachment from the English Parliament. Frankly, impeachment is a political question and Congress has the power to define it any way it wants to. Congress is limited only by what it perceives that the public will tolerate. There is no reason why the House Judiciary Committee could not define what President Reagan did as an impeachable offense.

SCHORR: The question of impeachment did not arise because, first of all, you've got a President at the end of his administration. Reagan would be out of office before the impeachment proceedings got anywhere. With Nixon, you had from 1973 to 1976 to complete the process; here you didn't have the time. In the second place, you can't impeach without a smoking gun, evidence so incontrovertible that the Supreme Court will accept it as such. That's why I argue that the Senate Watergate committee was lucky to find the tapes.

DASH: The Supreme Court has nothing to do with impeachment. Maybe we *were* lucky in finding the tapes and we set too high a standard. Now everybody looks for tapes or some other smoking gun.

But I think you don't need them. If you were to watch a prosecutor in a complex criminal case in a courtroom, very rarely would he have tapes or an eyewitness. Circumstantial evidence such as you'll find in this case is given every day in criminal courtrooms: juries are asked to make a decision of guilt on circumstantial evidence. If you were to ask whether or not there is strong circumstantial evidence of impeachable offenses—that the President did not "take care that the laws be faithfully executed"—any jury could draw that conclusion beyond a reasonable doubt. To impeach, of course, you need clear and convincing evidence. But Congress could define an impeachable offense here if it wanted.

The reason why members of Congress didn't recommend impeachment is that they would—excuse the expression—shit in their pants if you suggested that they impeach this President. Even if it was the beginning of his term, this Congress would not have recommended impeachment.

There is no reason why the House Judiciary Committee could not define what President Reagan did as an impeachable offense

LAPHAM: The only impeachment that came to trial was President Andrew Johnson's in 1868. Three points about Johnson's trial are worth remembering.

First, Johnson was impeached for openly violating a congressional law he thought unconstitutional. Congress had passed a law—later found unconstitutional, by the way—stating that the only way to fire executive-branch officials who had been confirmed was with congressional approval. Johnson deliberately fired his secretary of war to flout the law and force the question. In this case, Reagan *secretly* violated a law, the Boland Amendment, which he thought, at best, unwise, and possibly unconstitutional.

Second, Johnson was impeached and tried in March 1868, only eight months before the next election.

Third, at the time of Johnson's impeachment only three years had passed since our only civil war. Congress was bitterly divided between Southern Democrats and Radical Republicans. The Union was a good deal more fragile then than it is today.

How can we say that the country is too delicate to stand the strain of impeachment?

CONASON: Members of Congress will never impeach this President precisely because they're too afraid of his residual popularity. An impeachment, they might say, would be too disruptive at a moment of budget crisis and superpower negotiations. Perhaps they're right, but it sets a bad example for the future.

I would like to see them impeach the Attor-

ney General. They should make an example of this attorney general, possibly the most lawless chief law-enforcement official in the history of the United States.

SCHORR: You're being far too generous to John Mitchell.

KARP: Are you assuming that there isn't enough evidence to impeach the President? The so-called absence of direct evidence includes the massive shredding of documents by the President's advisers. These advisers systematically and wantonly violated the law—they destroyed the best possible documentary evidence. And the person who let this destruction take place is one of the President's henchmen, Ed Meese, the attorney general who alerted North so he could destroy the documents. Are we to conclude that it is not an impeachable offense for the President to preside over a lawless White House? Worse, these actions seem scarcely worth a serious rebuke. It's not even worth a major eloquent speech by somebody who loves the Republic.

LAPHAM: Is any impeachable offense described—or even obliquely alluded to—in this report?

KARP: Not really, but it's there nonetheless. Here is a juicy item deep in the text that only the Kabbalah readers could find: on June 25, 1984, with the President present, White House officials discussed raising money from other countries. And Secretary of State George Shultz told the President that Chief of Staff Jim Baker thought this plan was an impeachable offense! So the President has been told by distinguished members of his own administration that he's brushing up against impeachment.

CONASON: Then Ed Meese tells him, "No, it's legal." But Meese wasn't attorney general yet; they made him attorney general so he could make it legal.

KARP: But there is evidence there. You have the President's aides committing the President of the United States to a false story, which, if you read the report, you discover that he told the story and *knew* it was wrong, that is, he lied. But we can't use the word "lie" for presidents. They use the word "lie" for everyone else. Ronald Reagan only "speaks incorrectly knowingly."

SCHORR: It even went beyond that to the final meeting on the morning before Meese went out with the President to face the cameras. He sat there with Ed Meese and Don Regan, and those two asked each other, in front of Reagan, "Who knew?" And nobody bothered to turn to the President and ask, "Did you know?"

KARP: If the committees had done this work themselves—adding up the pieces as the Kabbalists do—this report would not be a pebble dropping into a bottomless well. It would be grounds for impeachment. People would not say, "We've heard it all before." There wouldn't have been a weak *New York Times* headline claiming, "Ultimate Responsibility Went to the President."

DASH: "The buck stops here," the President said.

KARP: The buck stops wherever Reagan can get it to stop. If the committees had done their work, we would not be sitting here discussing how feeble the hearings were. We would be discussing serious constitutional issues—and possibly impeachment.

DASH: If the administration asserted that the President knew but argued that the President was right, then the committees should have addressed the question, "Is the President right?" That's what we want to know. Because today the American public is uncertain where the constitutional power lies. Does the President have this right? Does Congress?

Unlike Watergate, you have a real clash of constitutional powers between what the President claims are his powers and what the Congress claims are its powers. I would have liked to have heard public testimony by constitutional experts representing both Congress and the President's points of view.

Maybe we would learn that Reagan believes, as Richard Nixon once said, that he is as absolute a monarch as Louis XIV—only four years at a time—and not subject to the law.

KARP: But we won't have that debate. *Time* concluded that it was a "very severe" report. It said the President should have taken "care that the laws be faithfully executed," but *Time* concluded that is *not* an impeachable offense.

Now what we have is lawless power—nothing short of a tyranny. We're living through tyranny for a whim, because this *contra* war is a whim, a vicious whim, but a whim nevertheless. There's no cover of necessity, no cover of danger, no rioting in the streets, no major power threatening us. We're letting tyranny for a whim go uncondemned.

Gentlemen and ladies, I want to ask you, what is going to happen down the road—and we'll be on that road some day—when you have lawless power, tyranny, not on a whim but with a cover of danger, with a pretext of disorder in the streets. What will we say then? ■

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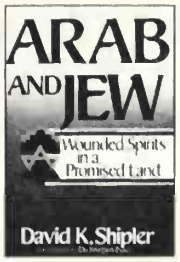

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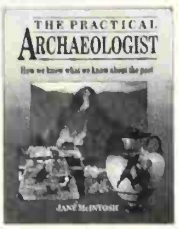

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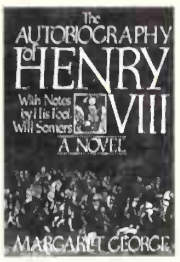

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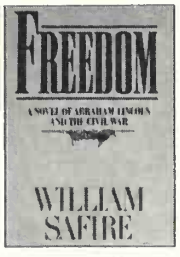

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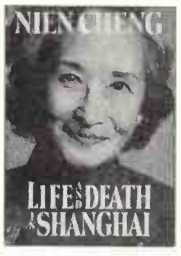

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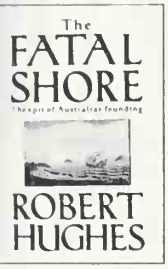

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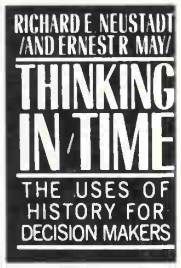

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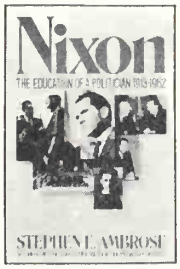

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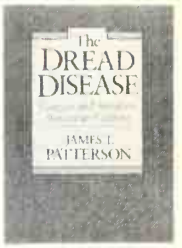

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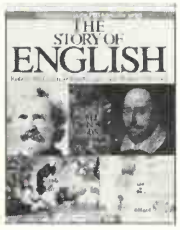

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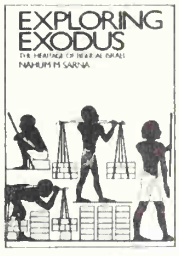

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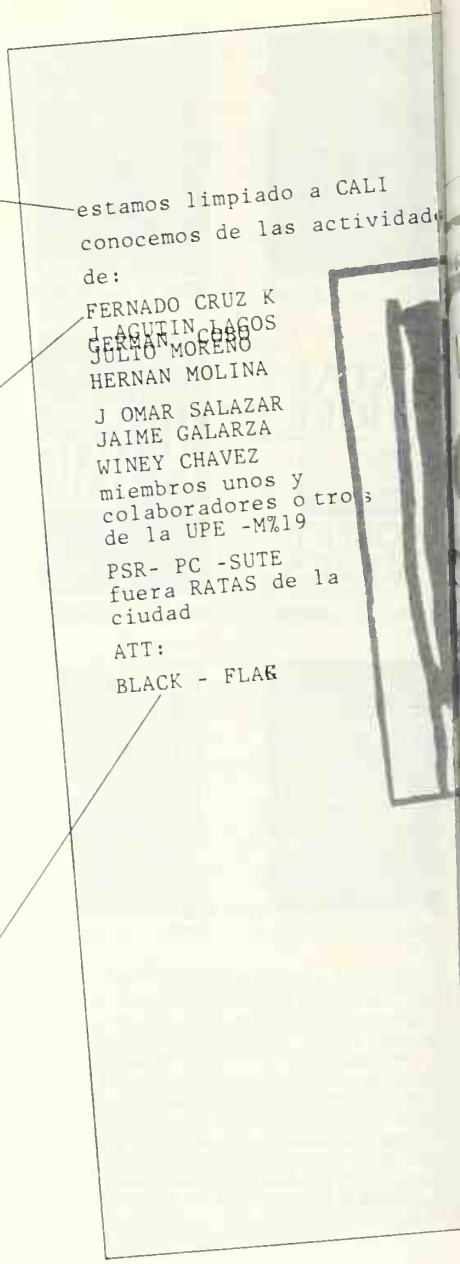
INVITATION

Colombian death squa

"We are cleaning up Cali"—that is the crudely typed message here. Cali is one of Colombia's largest cities, in the Andes south and west of Bogotá. "We" refers to Black Flag, and its preferred method of cleaning is a bullet to the head or chest, or at the very least, the threat of it. Black Flag is a death squad, one of an estimated 140 such groups doing dirty work today in Colombia. Who they are, exactly, is not certain. Clearly, army and police personnel and the cocaine bosses are involved; very probably so are wealthy landowners and industrialists. It is easier to identify the most prominent victims, left-wing political activists and organizers, and to discern the death squads' primary goal, to obstruct the government's effort to open the political process to opposition groups, including former guerrillas.

In this "death list," a kind of press release delivered to local journalists last September, Black Flag threatens to rid Cali of these eight men. So far, it has remained only a threat—no attempt has been made on the lives of any of them. Fernando Cruz, a writer and academic, is taking no chances: he has left the country. German Cobo, a member of the Cali city council, has hired bodyguards.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de:
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GERMAN COBO
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HERNAN MOLINA
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miembros unos y
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fuera RATAS de la
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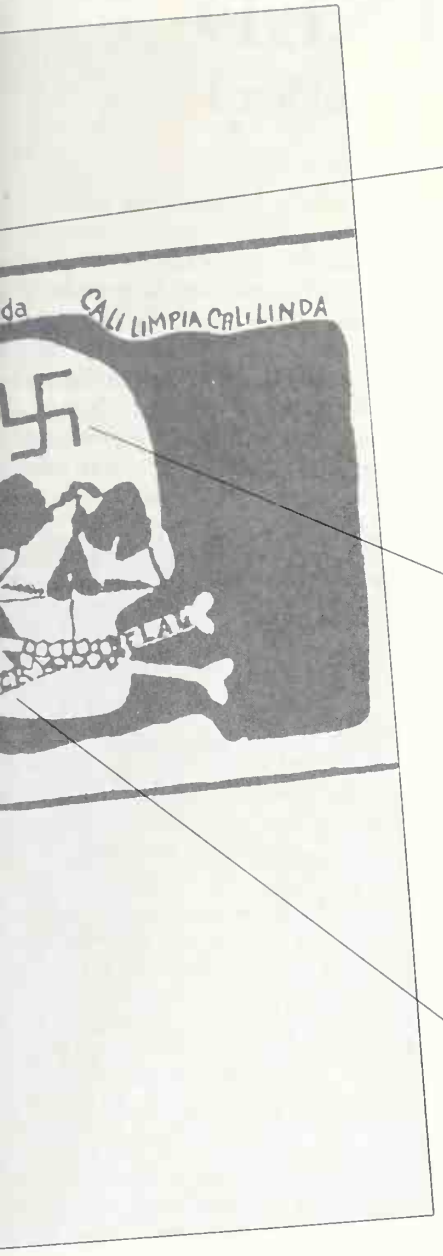
ATT:
BLACK - FLAG

Black Flag takes its name from the fumigant, or so it is believed. Other groups include Terminator—its killers leave T's of bullet holes in their victims' chests—the Implacable Justice Bringer, and Kankill. Death to Kidnappers, among the first and probably still the largest of the death squads, was established in 1982 by leading drug families whose children were being kidnapped for ransom by left-wing guerrillas. (Seven different guerrilla organizations are still waging war in Colombia, and over the years they too have been responsible for terrible acts of violence.) Although Death to Kidnappers operates nationwide, most death squads tend to be small and locally based. They act without much fear of reprisal by authorities. Few members have ever been arrested, fewer still convicted.

Jamie Fellner is a consultant for Americas Watch.

A MURDER

essage, *by Jamie Fellner*



Those on the death list stand accused of "pernicious activities," activities nowhere enumerated. What we learn from reading below the list of names is that the men are believed by Black Flag to be members of, or collaborators with, the guerrilla organization M-19; the Communist Party; the Patriotic Union (UP), a new left-wing party formed by ex-guerrillas; and the United Syndicate of Educational Workers of Valle, a union. As in Argentina in the 1970s, and later in El Salvador, death squads view guerrilla groups and legal political organizations as equally subversive and equally damned. The death squad is prosecutor, judge, jury, and executioner.

The swastika is appropriate. Like the Nazis, the Colombian death squads target not only political opponents but "social undesirables." Homosexuals and prostitutes are gunned down in the streets; so are beggars and petty thieves. An estimated 100 such "nonpolitical" killings are carried out each month. Although killings of groups are rare, last June in the city of Medellin seven members of a death squad walked into a late-night dive, lined up drinkers, and opened fire, killing ten. Later, in a manifesto, they announced their motive: "We want to do away with the filth."

The skull and crossbones is a traditional warning of a threat to life. What sort of threat do the death squads pose? According to human-rights groups in Colombia, the death squads are responsible for many of the 5,000 political assassinations carried out since 1982. The Patriotic Union reports that nearly 500 of its members and supporters have been killed. There have also been hundreds of "disappearances." Mayoral elections—the first in Colombia's history—are scheduled for next month; they offer new political participants, such as the UP, the chance to gain some power—peacefully. Black Flag and many other death squads will no doubt continue their own campaigns to ensure that this doesn't occur.

WHEN FREE SPEECH WAS FIRST CONDEMNED

The trial of Socrates reconsidered

By I. F. Stone

In 399 B.C. Socrates stood trial for impiety and for corrupting the youth of Athens. The speech Socrates made to the 500-man jury, reconstructed by Plato in his Apology, *is a classic text of Greek philosophy and part of the canon of Western thought. But the speech did not convince the jury of Socrates' innocence: he was sentenced to death by poisoning.*

What follows is an analysis of the trial and some thoughts on how it might have gone differently—in particular, how Socrates might have won acquittal. Cast as a dialogue, it presents the struggle to preserve free speech in a context relevant to both the ancient and the modern world.

What is the most important discovery you have made about the trial of Socrates?

How easily he might have won acquittal.

What's your evidence?

To start with, the slim majority who voted for conviction.

What was the vote?

The vote of the jury was 280 for conviction and 220 for acquittal. So a shift of thirty votes—or 6 percent of the voters—would have created a tie, and in Athens a tie would set free the accused.

Was Socrates aware of this?

Of course. In Plato's *Apology*, he expresses his surprise at the narrowness of the verdict against him. "I did not expect so small a majority," he says, "but a large one."

I. F. Stone was for many years the editor and publisher of I. F. Stone's Weekly, *a Washington newsletter. Now eighty, he has taught himself ancient Greek in the years of his retirement in order to write and think about the lessons of classical Athens. He published one of the first of his studies in the January 1981 issue of* Harper's Magazine *under the title "Plato's Ideal Bedlam." His new book,* The Trial of Socrates, *on the basis of which he wrote this dialogue, will be published this month by Little, Brown.*

Why was Socrates surprised?

Socrates clearly expected a large and decisive majority against him. I think he had good reason to be surprised by the close vote. His life-long teaching had been consistently hostile to Athenian democracy, and his thought and opinions had attracted the kind of anti-democratic and pro-Spartan "jet set" youth who had twice overthrown the democracy in the decade and a half before his trial. Moreover, his chief accuser, Anytos, enjoyed great prestige—he was one of the generals who restored democracy in Athens barely four years before Socrates was indicted. If the Athenian demos, the common people or the many, had been as benighted and biased as Socrates believed them to be, his case would indeed have been hopeless. But the closely divided jury shows that his case was not hopeless—that the jury was troubled about convicting him.

Why do you think the jury was troubled?

Because free expression permeated the political and artistic life of Athens and had made it—as Pericles boasts in Thucydides—"the school of Hellas." Philosophers from all over the Mediterranean world flocked to Athens to address its eager audiences. The city had neither a sacred party line nor an un-Athenian Activities Committee. And what in truth had Socrates done? He denied that he had ever joined in any of the aristocratic conspiracies against the government of Athens or committed any overt act against it, and no evidence was offered to the contrary. He had done his duty bravely as a citizen soldier. He was indicted for what he said and taught: it was purely a prosecution of *ideas*, and therefore at odds with the city's most basic traditions. That is what must have troubled the Athenians then as it still troubles the modern reader now. Indeed, if the Athenians had not felt so strongly

out free speech they would not have waited ntil Socrates was seventy before taking him to urt.

So what conclusion do you draw from this?

If Socrates had pleaded the right to free eech, if he had offered a civil-libertarian de-nse, if he had appealed to the fundamental inciples of Athenian democracy, I believe he uld have turned that closely divided jury to s favor and won acquittal.

Why didn't he do so?

Socrates didn't believe in free speech and he inted to be convicted. There is evidence, of hich too few are aware, that he wanted to die d set out deliberately to provoke the jury.

◆

So where do you begin your retrial of the case?

With the fundamental divergence between e premises of Athenian democracy and the achings of Socrates.

How do you describe them?

One might think, from reading Plato, that crates became unpopular because he went ound exhorting his fellow citizens to virtue. course that is one way to lose friends in any ciety. But there were basic issues about which crates differed irreconcilably with his fellow izens, and indeed with those of all but the most backward Greek areas like Crete and Sparta, or semi-barbarian Macedonia. Socrates was not just anti-democratic. He was anti-political in the Greek sense of the term. He did not approve of the polis, whether ruled by the many, as in the democracies, or the few, as in the oligarchies. He did not believe that people were capable of self-government: he saw the human community as a herd. A herd requires a shepherd as its master, and the herdsman does not consult his sheep.

Socrates rejected the polis altogether. He felt that the good life could only be achieved by withdrawing from it and keeping one's soul unsullied by politics.

What was the dominant Greek view?

Aristotle later summed this up best when he declared that man is a political animal, i.e., an animal that lives in a city-state or community, *koinonia.* Communal life is made possible because man, unlike the other animals, has Logos—the power of reasoned and persuasive speech. He can tell right from wrong, and therefore is able to live peacefully with his fellows with sufficient respect for the opinions and rights of others to make the community viable. Aristotle said that the solitary man is either a savage or a god.

The attaining of knowledge for him, as for

Socrates was anti-political. He did not believe the people were capable of self-government

nting from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Wolfe Fund, 1931. Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Fund Collection. 31.45

Socrates admired the tight little militaristic oligarchy of Sparta, though we don't know just why

most Greeks, was not a metaphysical wild goose chase for unattainable absolute definitions—for that is what Socrates was up to—but the steady accumulation of common wisdom distilled from common experience. Finally, Aristotle saw the city as the place where men could best achieve the good life, each fulfilling his individual capacities, whether as a tragic poet or a humble craftsman, or, yes, as an endless and eternally charming talker like Socrates. Socrates would have died frustrated and unfulfilled without the ever-curious listeners and ready interlocutors Athens afforded him.

Imagine! In Plato's dialogue the *Gorgias*, we find Socrates—who made loquacity his life's mission—accusing Pericles of having made the Athenians talkative!

Are you expressing the views of Socrates, or Plato's view of Socrates' views?

These are views attributed to Socrates in Xenophon as well as Plato; both were disciples of Socrates, and together they provide us with the fullest contemporary view of him. This is also the opinion of other followers of Socrates. His followers varied widely, as St. Augustine notes, in their philosophical views. But politically all Socratics rejected the polis, as Socrates himself did.

Who did Socrates believe should rule?

The ideal, indeed the only rational, ruler for Socrates, as expressed by him in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, was "the man who knows." This was, of course, the germ that Plato developed into the idea of rule by a philosopher-king.

Did Socrates ever think of running for public office as "the man who knows"?

The Delphic oracle, as Socrates boasted, said that no one was wiser than he. But Socrates spent his life demonstrating that he knew only that he *didn't* know, which put him one rung above all other Athenians, none of whom could meet his standard for real knowledge.

So that left the city up a creek with no qualified candidate?

Exactly.

So Socrates had nothing but contempt for the city-state?

Well, he did have a curious infatuation with Sparta, the great rival and enemy of Athens.

Why do you call it curious?

Because Sparta had no use for a Socrates. It was suspicious of foreigners and foreign ideas. It was a dour military state where members of the ruling class led a barracks existence of constant military training. They were a minority holding down their human herd of serfs, the helots, who cultivated their fields. Traders and craftsmen, members of the middle class—which in Athens was the most dynamic element in society—led a stunted and barely tolerated existence on the fringes of Spartan life, and were denied th rights of citizenship. Sparta was devoid of ph losophers and artists. It never had a Partheno or a theater. It had one or two poets, but thes were famous mostly for war songs. Sparta an Crete were the cultural deserts of ancien Greece. Yet we know from Plato's *Crito* tha Socrates admired these tight little militaristi oligarchies. Just why is never explained.

Did such crotchety views bother the Athenians

Yes, because the idealization of Sparta wa characteristic of the young, wealthy, disaffecte aristocrats who hated democracy and were botl contemptuous and envious of the "pushy" trad ers and craftsmen who were achieving wealth and contesting the political primacy of the old landed gentry. Socrates, though himself middl class (the son of a stonecutter), became the ido of the disdainful and alienated young aristocrat in Athens, Plato and Xenophon among them.

How do we know this?

From our earliest contemporary glimpse o Socratic politics: the *Birds* of Aristophanes. In a joyous spoof of his fellow Athenians, the comic poet ridiculed these privileged young malcontents for imitating Spartan manners, wearing their hair long and unkempt, going around unwashed, wearing short cloaks and carrying little cudgels as Spartans did. Aristophanes even coined a Greek word for them. He called them *esokritoun*—"Socratified."

Did that get Socrates into trouble?

For a long time no one took these young men seriously; their infatuation with Sparta and Socrates was a joke. But then the joke suddenly went sour.

What do you mean?

The joke became what we would call, in Justice Holmes's famous phrase, a "clear and present danger." In the last decade and a half of the life of Socrates, these young aristocrats—in the wake of Athenian military defeats and with the connivance of the Spartans—twice overthrew the democracy and became the bully boys, the hit squads and storm troopers of rapacious dictatorships. Life, liberty, and property were never as insecure in Athens as under these two anti-democratic regimes. The first overthrow was in 411 B.C. The second, in 404 B.C., was led by Critias and Charmides, relatives of Plato and former students of Socrates. They appear as honored figures in the Platonic dialogues. This rebellious fringe of Athenian society made a third but unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the democracy again in 402 B.C., just three years before the trial of Socrates.

These three events shattered the confidence of the Athenians and made them less tolerant. But for this, Socrates would never have been brought to trial.

Are there trustworthy sources for all this?

The terror imposed on Athens by the rule of so-called Four Hundred in 411 B.C. is told by ucydides with his Olympian objectivity. The rors of The Thirty in 404 B.C. are related h equal objectivity by Xenophon (though was then living as an exile in Sparta) and firmed by Aristotle in his work on the *Con-ution of Athens*. Xenophon's history, the *Hel-ca*, is also our source for the renewed threat lemocracy in 402 B.C. These events are all of the story that Plato does not tell.

What did Socrates do during the reign of The rty?

There was a struggle against The Thirty, and rates might have made himself a hero of the stance if he had spoken against their rule or the city to join the opposition. Instead he od above the battle, neither supporting nor osing the dictators.

But didn't Xenophon in his Memorabilia*—or moirs of Socrates—picture Socrates as at odds Critias and The Thirty?*

True, but that opposition was minimal and vate. Socrates refused to take part in the ar-of the wealthy resident alien, Leon of Sala-. Leon was only one of many such *metics* of class whom the dictators executed without l in order to seize their property; The Thirty d Leon's property to pay the expenses of the rtan garrison, which had occupied Athens kept them in power.

Wasn't that praiseworthy as civil disobedience?

ndeed it was. But Socrates would have fared ter at his trial—indeed I believe he would er have been indicted—if he had done re. If he had warned Leon of the danger, if he made a public protest, if he—the lifelong cher of virtue—had denounced these im-ral and illegal acts, and especially if he had the city to join the opposition. But through-the conflict, he stayed in the city.

Why do you emphasize the phrase "stayed in the "?

Under the amnesty that followed the restora-n of democracy, no one except the oligarchic ers could be prosecuted for anything they had ne or failed to do before and during the dicta-ship. But we know from legal pleadings in the owing generation that to have "stayed in the " during the conflict was regarded as shame-and could be used to prejudice the jury.

◆

You mentioned earlier that Socrates deliberately out to turn the jury against him. Where is the of of this?

The evidence is in Xenophon's *Apology*. Un-Plato's *Apology*, Xenophon's is not a mas-piece and is therefore little read. It is sketchy and seems to have been written soon after the trial. But Xenophon's plain and hasty account tells us things that Plato prefers to veil.

What does Xenophon add to the story?

Xenophon says that everybody who wrote about the trial was surprised at the tone Socrates took in his own defense and felt that it could only serve to provoke a conviction.

Does Xenophon agree?

He agrees that the way Socrates handled his defense was hardly calculated to obtain an acquittal. But he says this should not have occasioned surprise because Socrates wanted to die.

That's not the impression from reading Xenophon's Apology *in translation.*

That's because the reverence for Socrates is such that most English versions of Xenophon's *Apology* have mistranslated a key word in the Greek text and confused the reader.

What word is that?

The word is *megalegoria* and it appears no less than three times on the first page. Let us take the Loeb bilingual edition as our example. There—I suppose for euphony—we find three different renderings of this one word: (1) "the loftiness of his words," (2) "his lofty utterance," and (3) "the sublimity of his speech."

What's wrong with that?

A sharp-eyed reader, even without the Greek text, will sense that something is wrong with these translations because Xenophon argues that "this was appropriate to the resolve he had made." The resolve was that Socrates had decided it was better to die than to be acquitted, since at seventy he believed that old age and its ailments would soon overtake him.

Isn't that quite plausible?

Indeed it is, and it also fits with Socrates' attitude as described by Plato. But what is implausible is this: If he wanted to die, why would he speak with loftiness or sublimity? Athenian juries were notoriously susceptible to elevated rhetoric and beauty of diction, as indeed they were to beauty in all its forms. To speak that way to the jurists would not have *antagonized* them. It would have swayed the jury to acquit. Socrates himself observes in Xenophon's account how often Athenian juries "have been carried away by an eloquent speech." So if *megalegoria* meant eloquence, it was hardly suited to what Xenophon says was Socrates' purpose.

So how do you solve that puzzle?

By taking a fresh look at the original text and the Greek language. And we find something fascinating: *megalegoria* did mean sublimity of expression at one time. But that meaning developed many centuries *after* the trial of Socrates, in writings on Greek rhetoric under the Roman Empire. At the time of the trial, *megalegoria*—literally "big talking"—meant boastfulness and

He stood above the battle, neither supporting nor opposing the dictators ruling Athens

I believe Socrates was unjustly accused, that this was purely a prosecution for opinion

arrogance of expression. This meaning is attested to by its usage in other works by Xenophon and those of other writers of the time. So you see, Xenophon is saying that Socrates was being arrogant and boastful. And that was well calculated to achieve what Socrates wanted—conviction and the death sentence.

Does Plato's account rebut Xenophon's?

On the contrary, if you reread the *Apology*, the *Crito*, and the *Phaedo* after reading Xenophon, you will see that Plato's version, though more subtle, dovetails with Xenophon's.

Give us an example.

What most antagonized the jury, as reported in both Plato and Xenophon, was Socrates' claim that the oracle at Delphi had termed him the wisest of men, as Xenophon puts it, or as Plato more enigmatically treats it, that no one was wiser than Socrates. In his *Apology*, Plato says that there was a *thorubos*, an angry outcry from the jury, when Socrates said this. Socrates felt it necessary to deny that he was boasting. In that denial, Socrates uses the Greek expression *mega legein*—big talk or boasting. That is an exact synonym for the *megalegoria* in Xenophon.

Is there evidence elsewhere in Plato to support Xenophon?

Yes. In the *Crito*, after the trial, Socrates' disciples complain that he mishandled his defense. Later in the *Phaedo* they even suggest that he seems to have been bent on a kind of suicide.

How does Socrates answer that charge?

By an implicit admission. Socrates responds with a lovely but essentially nonsensical mystical discourse in which he argues that the philosopher should seek death as fulfillment because only in death is the soul freed from the body and able at last to contemplate the eternal and unchangeable Ideas. The *Phaedo* becomes a paean to death. It is a beautiful dialogue. But it certainly does not deny that in a sense Socrates gave himself the hemlock.

But are you not skipping ahead in the trial?

True. An Athenian trial had two phases. First the jury had to vote on whether to convict or not, and then on the penalty. Under Athenian procedure, the prosecution proposed one penalty and the defense another. The jury could not "split the difference": it had to vote one or the other. The prosecution proposed the death penalty. Then Socrates went on to antagonize the jury again by proposing counter-penalties the jury could hardly take seriously.

Are you relying now on Xenophon's account or Plato's?

Plato's is the fuller. He tells us how, in this concluding part of the trial, Socrates provoked the jury by a suggestion it was bound to consider offensive.

What was that?

In Athens, civic heroes and other distinguished persons were honored with free meals in the city hall. Socrates suggested that as his penalty he be given free meals there for the rest of his life. When this created an uproar of disapproval, he proposed a trivial fine. Only at last and too late, after appeals from Plato and other disciples that they were ready to put up the money, did he offer to pay a substantial fine. But by then the jury was too furious: it voted for the death penalty. It is worth knowing that the vote for the death penalty was much larger than the original vote for conviction. Many who had been ready to acquit now voted for death. *Megalegoria* had achieved its purpose.

How do you think Socrates should have handled his defense? What would you have advised if you had been his lawyer?

Actually Athens did not have lawyers in our sense. Litigants could hire speechwriters; Demosthenes was the most famous of them. Socrates didn't need one. He was the cleverest arguer in town and quite capable of a successful defense if he had wanted one.

Still, how would you have liked Socrates to handle his case?

I believe Socrates was unjustly accused, that no overt acts against the city were even alleged, much less proven, that this was purely a prosecution for opinion—for what he had said and taught in the last few years of his life. As such it violated the city's most precious principles. Free speech was the very basis of its democracy, of the debates in the assembly where the laws were made, and in the jury courts in which those laws were interpreted. Free speech made possible the masterpieces, tragic and comic, of the Athenian theater—still among the wonders of world literature. I think that Socrates could have swung that narrow 6-percent margin for conviction to acquittal if he had argued a free-speech defense.

◆

But what makes you think that Athenians were conscious of free speech as a basic principle of government?

If a society is conscious of an idea, it will have a word for it. The Romans had no free speech in our sense and they had no word for it. But I found that the ancient Greeks had no less than four terms for free speech. That is more than in any other language.

What were those four words?

The oldest, first encountered in Aeschylus, is compounded from the words for free, *eleutheros*, and mouth, *stomos*. The second turns up first in Herodotus, who made his history a prose epic in celebration of democracy, an account of the struggle of Greek democracy—especially Athe-

n—against Persian despotism. That word is *goria,* which etymologically means an equal ht to speak in the assembly. It thus became a nonym for political equality.

What were the other two?

The next was *parrhasia,* a word believed to be specific Athenian coinage. Its earliest appearce, as far as we can tell, is in the plays of Euides. It referred to both that frankness on ich the Athenians prided themselves and eir right to free speech as citizens of a free y. It was a flag-waver of a word for Athenian diences. Milton used a passage from Euripides the very beginning of his *Areopagitica,* the nost defense of a free press in modern times. w effectively Socrates might have used lines m Euripides to sway his jury for acquittal!

And what was the fourth?

Isologia, which means an equal right to speak. ppears in the history written by Polybius and s a special meaning for Americans. Polybius s the historian of the Achaean League, the t successful federal government in history, d the Framers of our Constitution looked to lybius for inspiration in establishing our own eral system. Polybius attributes the stability d survival of this Greek federation—long er Greek freedom had been crushed elsere by Macedonian and Roman armies—to e fact that an equal right to speak, *isologia,* exed within the member cities and in their fedl assembly or congress.

So how, specifically, if Socrates had wanted an quittal, should he have argued his case?

If I had been his speechwriter, I would have d him say this:

"Men of Athens, fellow citizens, this is not a al of Socrates but of ideas, and therefore of hens. You are not prosecuting me for any unful or impious act against our city or its als. No such evidence has been brought against .

"You are not prosecuting me for anything I l, but for what I have said and taught. You are reatening me with death because you do not e my views and my teaching. This is a prosution of ideas and that is something new in r city's history. In this sense, Athens is in the ck, not Socrates. Each of you, as my judges, is defendant.

"Let me be frank. I do not believe in your soled freedom of speech, but you do. I believe e opinions of ordinary men are only *doxa*—liefs without substance, pale shadows of reali not to be taken seriously, and likely only to d a city astray.

"I think it absurd to encourage the free utterce of unfounded or irrational opinions, or to se civic policy on a count of heads, like cabbages. Hence I do not believe in democracy. But you do. This is your test, not mine.

"Your freedom of speech is based on the assumption that every man's opinion is of value, and that the many are better guides than the few. But how can you boast of your free speech if you suppress mine? How can you listen to the shoemaker's or the tanner's views when you debate justice in the assembly, but shut me up when I express mine?

"You are proud that the gates of Athens have been opened to philosophers from all over Greece and even the outer barbarian world. Will you now execute one of your own because suddenly you cannot stand to hear an unpopular opinion? It is not I but you who will be disgraced forever by my condemnation.

"You say my ideas have been corrupting the youth and leading them to question the democracy. You say that I was Critias's teacher. You are acting as if you had become his pupils.

"The Thirty were arbitrary, and did as they pleased. You claim to be men who live by the law. Are you not acting like them? Tell me, now, by what law of Athens do you seek to restrict philosophic teaching? Where can I find it among the city's statutes? When was it debated and voted? Who proposed such a monstrosity, as you yourselves—in calmer days and in your right minds—would have termed it?

"The test of truly free speech is not whether what is said or taught conforms to any rule or ruler, few or many. Even under the worst dictator, it is not forbidden to agree with him. It is the freedom to disagree that constitutes freedom of speech. This has been the Athenian rule until now, the pride of our city, the glory on which your orators dwell. Will you turn your backs on it now?

"You say I have shown disrespect for the city's gods. Beware lest you make yourselves guilty of that very offense in condemning me. How can you honor Peitho—our civic goddess of persuasion—when persuasion is inhibited, and nonconformist thoughts prosecuted? Are you not disobeying Zeus Agoraios, the patron deity of free debate in the assembly, when you restrict debate by condemning me?

"Ideas are not as fragile as men. They cannot be made to drink hemlock. My ideas—and my example—will survive me. But the good name of Athens will wear a stain forever if you violate its traditions by convicting me. The shame will be yours, not mine."

You would have challenged them with a compliment?

Right. Had Socrates invoked freedom of speech as a basic right *of all Athenians,* he would have struck a deep and responsive chord. And I believe that the jury would have set him free. ■

Had Socrates invoked freedom of speech as a basic right, the jury would have set him free

CUSTOMS OF THE COUNTRY

By Madison Smartt Bell

I don't remember much about that place anymore. It was nothing but somewhere I came to put in some pretty bad time, though that was not what I had planned on when I went there. I had it in mind to improve things, but I don't think you could fairly claim that's what I did. So that's one reason I might just as soon forget about it. And I didn't stay there all that long, not more than about nine months or so, about the same time, come to think, that the child I was there to try to get back had lived inside my body.

It was a cluster-housing thing a little ways north out of town from Roanoke, on a two-lane road that crossed the railroad cut and went about a mile further up through the woods. The buildings looked something like a motel, a little raw still, though they weren't new. My apartment was no more than a place that would barely look all right and yet cost me little enough so I had something left over to give the lawyer. There was fresh paint on the walls and the trim in the kitchen and bathroom was in fair shape. And it was real quiet mostly, except that the man next door used to beat up his wife a couple of times a week. The place was soundproof enough I couldn't usually hear talk but I could hear yelling plain as day and when he got going good he would slam her bang into our common wall. If she hit in just the right spot it would send my pots and pans flying off the pegboard where I'd hung them above the stove.

Not that it mattered to me that the pots fell down, except for the noise and the time it took to pick them up again. Living alone like I was, I didn't have the heart to do much cooking and if I did fix myself something I mostly used an ol iron skillet that hung there on the same wall All the others I only had out for show. Th whole apartment was done about the same way made into something I kept spotless and didn much care to use. I wore my hands out scrub bing everything clean and then saw to it that i stayed that way. I sewed slipcovers for tha threadbare batch of Goodwill furniture I'd pu in the place, and I hung curtains and found some sunshiny posters to tack on the walls, and I never cared a damn about any of it. It was ar act, and I wasn't putting it on for me or for Da vey, but for all the other people I expected t come to see it and judge it. And however good could get it looking, it never felt quite right.

I felt even less at home there than I did at my job, which was waitressing three snake-bends o the counter at the Truckstops of America out a the I-81 interchange. The supervisor was a mar named Tim that used to know my husband Patrick from before we had the trouble. He was nice about letting me take my phone calls there and giving me time off to see the lawyer, and in most other ways he was a decent man to work for, except that now and then he would have a tantrum over something or other and try to scream the walls down. Still, it never went beyond yelling, and he always acted sorry once he got through. The other waitress on my shift was an older lady named Prissy, and I liked her all right in spite of the name.

We were both on a swing shift that rolled over every ten days, which was the main thing I didn't like about that job. The six-to-two I hated the worst because it would have me getting back to my apartment building around three in the morning, not the time it looked its

Madison Smartt Bell's most recent novel is The Year of Silence.

st. It was the kind of place where at that time night I could expect to find the deputies out ere looking for somebody, or else some other nd of trouble. I never got to know the neighrs any too well, but a lot of them were pretty rry—small-time criminals, dope-dealers and ieves, none of them much good at whatever it s they did. There was one check forger that I iew of, and a man who would break into the her apartments looking for whiskey. One ing and another, along that line.

The man next door, the one that beat up his fe, didn't do crimes or work either that I ever ard. He just seemed to lay around the place, aybe drawing some kind of welfare. There asn't a whole lot of him, he was just a stringy tle man, hair and mustache a dishwater own, cheap green tattoos running up his ms. Maybe he was stronger than he looked, t I did wonder how come his wife would take from him, since she was about a head taller d must have outweighed him an easy ten unds. I might have thought she was whipping him—stranger things have been known to on—but she was the one that seemed like e might break out crying if you looked at her ooked. She was a big fine-looking girl with a vely shape, and long brown hair real smooth d straight and shiny. I guess she was too hamered down most of the time to pay much attention to how she dressed, but still she had pretty brown eyes, big and long-lashed and soft sort of like a cow's eyes, except I never saw a cow that looked that miserable.

At first I thought maybe I might make a friend of her, she was about the only one around there I felt like I might want to. Our paths crossed pretty frequent, either around the apartment building or in the Kwik Sack back toward town, where I'd find her running the register some days. But she was shy of me, shy of anybody I suppose. She would flinch if you did so much as say hello. So after a while I quit trying. She'd get hers about twice a week, maybe other times I wasn't around to hear it happen. It's a wonder all the things you can learn to ignore, and after a month or so I was that accustomed I barely noticed when they would start in. I would just wait till I thought they were good and through, and then get up and hang those pans back on the wall where they were supposed to go. And all the while I would just be thinking about some other thing, like what might be going on with my Davey.

The place where he had been fostered out was not all that far away, just about ten or twelve miles up the road, out there in the farm country. The people were named Baker. I never got to first names with them, just called them Mr. and Mrs. They were older than me, both just into

stration by David Johnson

their forties, and they didn't have any children of their own. The place was only a small farm but Mr. Baker grew tobacco on the most of it and I'm told he made it a paying thing. Mrs. Baker kept a milk cow or two and she grew a garden and canned in the old-time way. Thrifty people. They were real sweet to Davey and he seemed to like being with them pretty well. He had been staying there almost the whole two years, which was lucky too, since most children usually got moved around a whole lot more than that.

And that was the trouble, like the lawyer explained to me, it was just too good. Davey was doing too well out there. He'd made out better in the first grade than anybody would have thought. So nobody really felt like he needed to be moved. The worst of it was the Bakers had got to like him well enough they were saying they wanted to adopt him if they could. Well, it would have been hard enough for me without that coming into it.

Even though he was so close, I didn't go out to see Davey near as much as I would have liked to. The lawyer kept telling me it wasn't a good idea to look like I was pressing too hard. Better take it easy till all the evaluations came in and we had our court date and all. Still, I would call and go on out there maybe a little more than once a month, most usually on the weekends, since that seemed to suit the Bakers better. They never acted like it was any trouble, and they were always pleasant to me, or polite might be a better word yet. The way it sometimes seemed they didn't trust me did bother me a little. I would have liked to take him out to the movies a time or two, but I could see plain enough the Bakers wouldn't have been easy about me having him off their place.

But I can't remember us having a bad time, any of those times I went. He was always happy to see me, though he'd be quiet when we were in the house, with Mrs. Baker hovering. So I would get us outside quick as ever I could and, once we were out, we would just play like both of us were children. There was an open pasture, a creek with a patch of woods, a hay barn where we would play hide-and-go-seek. I don't know what all else we did, silly things mostly. That was how I could get near him the easiest, he didn't get a whole lot of playing in, way out there. The Bakers weren't what you would call playful and there weren't any other children living near. So that was the thing I could give him that was all mine to give. When the weather was good we would stay outside together most all the day and he would just wear me out. But over the winter those visits seemed to get shorter and shorter, like the days.

Davey called me Momma still, but I suppose he had come to think your mother was something more like a big sister or just some kind of friend. Mrs. Baker was the one doing for him a the time. I don't know just what he remembere from before, or if he remembered any of the ba part. He would always mind me but he neve acted scared around me, and if anybody says h did they lie. But I never really did get to kno what he had going on in the back of his min about the past. At first I worried the Bake might have been talking against me, but after had seen a little more of them I knew the wouldn't have done anything like that wouldn't have thought it right. So I expec whatever Davey knew about that other time h remembered on his own. He never mentione Patrick hardly and I think he really had forgot ten about him. Thinking back I guess he neve saw that much of Patrick even when we were al living together. But Davey had Patrick's mark al over him, the same eyes and the same red hair

Patrick had thick wavy hair the shade of a Irish setter's, and a big rolling mustache the same color. Maybe that was his best feature, bu he was a good-looking man altogether, still is suppose, though the prison haircut don't suit him. If he ever had much of a thought in his head I suspect he had knocked it clean out with dope, yet he was always fun to be around. wasn't but seventeen when I married him and didn't have any better sense myself. Right to the end I never thought anything much was the matter, all his vices looked so small to me. He was good-tempered almost all the time, and good with Davey when he did notice him. Never once did he raise his hand to either one of us. In little ways he was unreliable, late, not showing up at all, gone out of the house for days sometimes. Hindsight shows me he ran with other women, but I managed not to know anything about that at the time. He had not quite finished high school and the best job he could hold was being an orderly down at the hospital, but he made a good deal of extra money stealing pills out of there and selling them on the street.

That was something else I didn't allow myself to think on much back then. Patrick never told me a lot about it anyhow, always acted real mysterious about whatever he was up to in that line. He would disappear on one of his trips and come back with a whole mess of money, and I would spend up my share and be glad I had it too. I never thought much about where it was coming from, the money or the pills either one. He used to keep all manner of pills around the house, Valium and ludes and a lot of different kinds of speed, and we both took what we felt like whenever we felt in the mood. But what Patrick made the most on was Dilaudid. I used to take it without ever knowing what it really was, but once everything fell in on us I found out it was a bad

ıg, bad as heroin they said, and not much erent, and it was what they gave Patrick t of his time for.

truly was surprised to find out that it was the ngest dope we had, because I never really ı felt like it made you all that high. You ld just take one and kick back on a long stroke and whatever trouble you might e, it would not be able to find you. It came ike nothing but it was the hardest habit to , and I was a long time shaking it. I might be king about it yet if I would let myself, and e were times, all through the winter I spent in that apartment, I'd catch myself remembering the feeling.

y

ou couldn't call it a real bad winter, there n't much snow or anything, but I was cold about all the time, except when I was at k. All I had in the apartment was some elec- baseboard heaters, and they cost too much me to leave them running very long at a tch. I'd keep it just warm enough so I ldn't see my breath, and spend my time in a bathtub or under a big pile of blankets on bed. Or else I would just be cold.

here was some kind of strange quietness ıt that place all during the cold weather. If phone rang it would make me jump. Didn't ı like there was any TV or radio ever playing t door. The only sound coming out of there Susan getting beat up once in a while. That her name, a sweet name, I think. I found it from hearing him say it, which he used to do ost every time before he started on her. "Su- " he'd call out, loud enough I could hear through the wall. He'd do it a time or two, might have been calling her to him, and I ose she went. After that would come a bad ıce that reminded you of a snake being ewhere around. Then a few minutes' worth itting sounds and then the big slam as she he wall, and the clatter of my pots falling on floor. He'd throw her at the wall maybe e or twice, usually when he was about to get ugh. By the time the pots had quit spinning the floor it would be real quiet over there n, and the next time I saw Susan she'd be king in that ginger way people have when 're hiding a hurt, and if I said hello to her d give a little jump and look away.

After a while I quit paying it much mind, it n't feel any different to me than hearing the s on the radio. All their carrying on was not more to me than a bump in the rut I had ked myself into, going back and forth from job, cleaning that apartment till it hurt, ing up the lawyer about once a week to find what was happening, which never was ch. He was forever trying to get our case be- fore some particular doctor or social worker or judge who'd be more apt to help us than another, so he said. I would call him up from the TOA, all eager to hear what news he had and every time it was another delay. In the beginning I used to talk it all over with Tim or Prissy after I hung up, but after a while I got out of the mood to discuss it. I kept ahead making those calls but every one of them just wore out my hope a little more, like a drip of water wearing down a stone. And little by little I got in the habit of thinking that nothing really was going to change.

Somehow or other that winter passed by, with me going from one phone call to the next, going out to wait on that TOA counter, coming home to shiver and hold hands with myself and lie awake all through the night, or the day, depending what shift I was on. It was springtime, well into warm weather, before anything really happened at all. That was when the lawyer called *me*, for a change, and told me he had some people lined up to see me at last.

Well, I was all ready for them to come visit, come see how I'd fixed up my house and all the rest of my business to get set for having Davey back with me again. But as it turned out, nobody seemed to feel like they were called on to make that trip. "I don't think that will be necessary" was what one of them said, I don't recall which. They both talked about the same, in voices that sounded like filling out forms.

So all I had to do was drive downtown a couple of times and see them in their offices. That child psychologist was the first and I doubt he kept me more than half an hour. I couldn't tell the point of most of the questions he asked. My second trip I saw the social worker, who turned out to be a black lady once I got down there, though I never could have told it over the phone. Her voice sounded like it was coming out of the TV. She looked me in the eye while she was asking her questions, but I couldn't tell a thing about what she thought. It wasn't till I was back in the apartment that I understood she must have already had her mind made up.

That came to me in a sort of a flash, while I was standing in the kitchen washing out a cup. Soon as I walked back in the door I saw my coffee mug left over from breakfast, and I kicked myself for letting it sit out. I was giving it a hard scrub with a scouring pad when I realized it didn't matter anymore. I might just as well have dropped it on the floor and got what kick I could out of watching it smash, because it wasn't going to make any difference to anybody now. But all the same I rinsed it and set it in the drainer, careful as if it was an eggshell. Then I stepped backward out of the kitchen and took a long look around that cold shabby place and thought

it might be for the best that nobody was coming. How could I have expected it to fool anybody else when it wasn't even good enough to fool me? A lonesomeness came over me, I felt like I was floating all alone in the middle of cold air, and then I began to remember some things I would just as soon as have not.

No, I never did like to think about this part, but I have had to think about it time and again, with never a break for a long, long time, because I needed to get to understand it at least well enough to believe it never would ever happen anymore. And I had come to believe that, in the end. If I hadn't, I never would have come back at all. I had found a way to trust myself again, though it took me a full two years to do it, and though of course it still didn't mean that anybody else would trust me.

What had happened was that Patrick went off on one of his mystery trips and stayed gone a deal longer than usual. Two nights away, I was used to that, but on the third I did start to wonder. He normally would have called at least, if he was going to be gone that long of a stretch. But I didn't hear a peep until about halfway through the fourth day. And it wasn't Patrick himself that called, but one of those public-assistance lawyers from downtown.

Seemed like the night before Patrick had got himself stopped on the interstate loop down there. The troopers said he was driving like a blind man, and he was so messed up on whiskey and ludes I suppose he must have been pretty near blind at that. Well, maybe he would have just lost his license or something like that, only that the backseat of the car was loaded up with all he had lately stole out of the hospital.

So it was bad. It was so bad my mind just could not contain it, and every hour it seemed to be getting worse. I spent the next couple of days running back and forth between the jail and that lawyer, and I had to haul Davey along with me wherever I went. He was too little for school and I couldn't find anybody to take him right then, though all that running around made him awful cranky. Patrick was just grim, he would barely speak. He already knew pretty well for sure that he'd be going to prison. The lawyer had told him there wasn't no use in getting a bondsman, he might just as well stay on in there and start pulling his time. I don't know how much he really saved himself that way, though, since what they ended up giving him was twenty-five years.

That was when all my troubles found me, quick. Two days after Patrick got arrested, I came down real sick with something. I thought at first it was a bad cold or the flu. My nose kept running and I felt so wore out I couldn't hardly get up off the bed and yet at the same time I felt real restless, like all my nerves had been scra bare. Well, I didn't really connect it up to fact that I'd popped the last pill in the hous couple of days before. What was really the m ter was me coming off that Dilaudid, but I di have any notion of that at the time.

I was laying there in bed not able to get and about ready to jump right out of my skin the same time when Davey got the drawer u derneath the stove open. Of course he was g ting restless himself with all that had been goi on, and me not able to pay him much mind. A our pots and pans were down in that drav then, and he began to take them out one a time and throw them on the floor. It made hell of a racket, and the shape I was in, I felt li he must be doing it on purpose to devil me called out to him and asked him to quit. Nice first: "You stop that, now, Davey, Momm don't feel good." But he kept right ahead. A he wanted was to have my attention, I kno but my mind wasn't working right just then. knew I should get up and just go lead him aw from there, but I couldn't seem to get myself move. I had a picture of myself doing the rig thing, but I just wasn't doing it. I was still lyi there calling to him to quit and he was st banging those pots around and before long I w screaming at him outright, and starting to cry the same time. But he never stopped a minute. guess I had scared him some already and he w just locked into doing it, or maybe he wanted t drown me out. Every time he flung a pot it fe like I was getting shot at. And the next thing knew I got myself in the kitchen someway and was snatching him up off the floor.

To this day I don't remember doing it, thoug I have tried and tried. I thought if I could call back then maybe I could root it out of myse and be shed of it for good and all. But all I eve knew was one minute I was grabbing a hold him and the next he was laying on the far side the room with his right leg folded up funn where it was broke, not even crying, just look ing surprised. And I knew that it had to be m that threw him over there because as sure as hel is real there was nobody else around that coul have done it.

I drove him to the hospital myself. I laid hin straight on the front seat beside me and drov with one hand all the way so I could hold on t him with the other. He was real quiet and rea brave the whole time, never cried the least bit just kept a tight hold on my hand with his Well, after a while, we got there and they ra him off somewhere to get his leg set and pretty soon the doctor came back out and asked m how it had happened.

It was the same hospital where Patrick had worked and I even knew that doctor a little bit.

ɔt that being connected to Patrick would have
ne me a whole lot of good around there at
ıt time. Still, I have often thought since then
ıt things might have come out better for me
d Davey both if I just could have lied to that
ın, but I was not up to telling a lie that any-
dy would be apt to believe. All I could do was
rt to scream and jabber like a crazy person,
d it ended up I stayed in that hospital quite a
v days myself. They took me for a junkie and I
ess I really was one too, though I hadn't
own it till that very day. And I never saw
ıvey again for a whole two years, not till
the first time they let me go out to the
Bakers'.

Sometimes you don't get but one mistake, if
e one you pick is bad enough. Do as much as
p in the road one time without looking, and
ur life could be over with then and there. But
ring those two years I taught myself to believe
ıt this mistake of mine could be wiped out,
ıt if I struggled hard enough with myself and
e world I could make it like it never had been.
Three weeks went by after I went to see that
cial worker, and I didn't have any idea what
s happening, or if anything was. Didn't call
ybody, I expect I was afraid to. Then one day
e phone rang for me out there at the TOA. It
s the lawyer and I could tell right off from
e sound of his voice I wasn't going to care for
s news. Well, he told me all the evaluations
d come in now, sure enough, and they
ren't running in our favor. They weren't
ainst *me*, he made sure to say that, it was more
e they were *for* the Bakers. And his judgment
s it wouldn't pay me anything if we went on
court. It looked like the Bakers would get Da-
y for good anyhow, and they were likely to be
sier about visitation if there wasn't any big
ssle. But if I drug them into court, then we
ould have to start going back over that whole
se history—

That was the word he used, *case history*, and it
s around about there that I hung up. I went
lking stiff-legged back across to the counter
d just let myself sort of drop on a stool. Prissy
d been covering my station while I was on the
one and she came right over to me then.

"What is it?" she said. I guess she could tell it
s something by the look on my face.

"I lost him," I said.

"Oh, hon', you know I'm so sorry," she said.
ıe reached out for my hand but I snatched it
ck. I know she meant it well but I just was not
the mood to be touched.

"There's no forgiveness," I said. I felt bitter
out it. It had been a hard road for me to come
near forgiving myself as I ever could. And
ıvey forgave me, I really knew that, I could tell
it in the way he acted when we were together. And if us two could do it, I didn't feel like it ought to be anybody else's business but ours. Tim walked up then and Prissy whispered something to him, and then he took a step nearer to me.

"I'm sorry," he told me.

"Not like I am," I said. "You don't know the meaning of the word."

"Go ahead and take off the rest of your shift if you feel like it," he said. "I'll wait on these tables myself, need be."

"I don't know it would make any difference," I said.

"Better take it easy on yourself," he said. "No use in taking it so hard. You're just going to have to get used to it."

"Is that a fact?" I said. And I lit myself a cigarette and turned my face away. We had been pretty busy, it was lunchtime, and the people were getting restless seeing all of us standing around there not doing a whole lot about bringing them their food. Somebody called out something to Tim, I didn't hear just what it was, but it set off one of his temper fits.

"Go on and get out of here if that's how you feel," he said. He was getting red in the face and waving his arms around to include everybody there in what he was saying. "Go on and clear out of here, every last one of you, and we don't care if you never come back. There's not one of you couldn't stand to miss a meal anyhow. Take a look at yourselves, you're all fat as hogs. . . ."

It seemed like he might be going to keep it up a good while, and he had already said I could leave, so I hung up my apron and got my purse and I left. It was the first time he ever blew up at the customers that way, it had always been me or Prissy or one of the cooks. I never did find out what came of it all because I never went back to that place again.

I drove home in such a poison mood I barely knew I was driving a car or that there were any others on the road. I was ripe to get killed or kill somebody, and I wouldn't have cared much either way. I kept thinking about what Tim had said about having to get used to it. It came to me that I was used to it already, I really hadn't been all that surprised. That's what I'd been doing all those months, just gradually getting used to losing my child forever.

When I got back to the apartment I just fell in a chair and sat there staring across at the kitchen wall. It was in my mind to pack my traps and leave that place, but I hadn't yet figured out where I could go. I sat there a good while, I guess. The door was ajar from me not paying attention, but it wasn't cold enough out to make any difference. If I turned my head that way I could see a slice of the parking lot. I saw Susan drive up and park and come limping to-

ward the building with an armload of groceries. Because of the angle I couldn't see her go into their apartment but I heard the door open and shut and after that it was quiet as a tomb. I kept on sitting there thinking about how used to everything I had got. There must have been generous numbers of other people too, I thought, who had got themselves accustomed to all kinds of things. Some were used to taking the pain and the rest were used to serving it up. About half of the world was screaming in misery, and it wasn't anything but a habit.

When I started to hear the hitting sounds come toward me through the wall, a smile came on my face like it was cut there with a knife. I'd been expecting it, you see, and the mood I was in I felt satisfied to see what I had expected was going to happen. So I listened a little more carefully than I'd been inclined to do before. It was *hit hit hit* going along together with a groan and a hiss of the wind being knocked out of her. I had to strain pretty hard to hear that breathing part, and I could hear him grunt too, when he got in a good one. There was about three minutes of that with some little breaks, and then a longer pause. When she hit the wall it was the hardest she had yet, I think. It brought down every last one of my pots at one time, including that big iron skillet that was the only one I ever used.

It was the first time they'd managed to knock that skillet down, and I was so impressed that I went over and stood looking down at it like I needed to make sure it was a real thing. I stared at the skillet so long it went out of focus and started looking more like a big black hole in the floor. That's when it dawned on me that this was one thing I didn't really have to keep on being used to.

It took three or four knocks before he came to the door, but that didn't worry me at all. I had faith, I knew he was going to come. I meant to stay right there till he did. When he came, he opened the door wide and stood there with his arms folded and his face all stiff with his secrets. It was fairly dark behind him, they had all the curtains drawn. I had that skillet held out in front of me in both my hands, like maybe I had come over to borrow a little hot grease or something. It was so heavy it kept wanting to dip down toward the floor like a water witch's rod. When I saw he wasn't expecting anything, I twisted the skillet back over my shoulder like baseball players do their bats, and I hit him bang across the face as hard as I knew how. He went down and out at the same time and fetched up on his back clear in the middle of the room.

Then I went in after him, with the skillet cocked and ready in case he made to get up. But he didn't look like there was a whole lot of fight left in him right then. He was awake, at least partly awake, but his nose was just spou blood and it seemed like I'd knocked out a of his teeth. I wish I could tell you I was sorr glad, but I didn't feel much of anything rea just that high lonesome whistle in the bloo used to get when I took all that Dilaudid. Su was sitting on the floor against the wall, lean down on her knees and sniveling. Her eyes w red but she didn't have any bruises where t showed. He never did hit her on the face, t was the kind he was. There was a big crack co ing down the wall behind her and I remem thinking it probably wouldn't be too much lo er before it worked through to my side.

"I'm going to pack and drive over to N folk," I told her. I hadn't thought of it bef but once it came out my mouth I knew it w what I would do. "You can ride along with me you want to. With your looks you could ma enough money serving drinks to the sailors buy that Kwik Sack and blow it up."

She didn't say anything, just raised her he up and stared at me kind of bug-eyed. And aft a minute I turned around and went out. It didn take me any time at all to get ready. All I h was a suitcase and a couple of boxes of oth stuff. The sheets and blankets I just pulled o the bed and stuffed in the trunk all in one b wad. I didn't care a damn about that furniture would have lit it on fire on a dare.

When I was done I stuck my head back in the other apartment. The door was still op like I had left it. What was she doing but knee ing down over that son of a bitch and trying t clean off his face with a washrag. I noticed h was making a funny sound when he breathe and his nose was still bleeding pretty quick, so thought maybe I had broke it. Well, I can't s that worried me much.

"Come on now if you're coming, girl," I said She looked up at me, not telling me one wor just giving me a stare out of those big cow eyes o hers like I was the one had been beating on he that whole winter through. And I saw then tha they were both of them stuck in their groov and that she would not be the one to step out o it. So I pulled back out of the doorway and wen on down the steps to my car.

I was speeding on the road to Norfolk, doing seventy, seventy-five. I'd have liked to gon faster if the car had been up to it. I can't say felt sorry for busting that guy, though I didn' enjoy the thought of it either. I just didn't know what difference it had made, and chances were it had made none at all. Kind of a funny thing when you thought about it that way. It was the second time in my life I'd hurt somebody bad, and the other time I hadn't meant to do it at all. This time I'd known what I was doing for sure, but I still didn't know what I'd done. ■

COOKIES WITH THE CANDIDATE

New Hampshire's living-room politics

By Donald Hall

We live in a patch Wilmot that nips across Route 4 be-een Andover and Danbury; our st office is Danbury, our telephone ndover, and our town meeting Wil-ot. On this road most houses raise orange or a blue newspaper tube side rural delivery's mailbox and ese colors record party affiliation, e the royal blue in northern Greece er World War II; blue tubes take w Hampshire's ultra-right Man-ester *Union Leader,* and orange es the liberal *Concord Monitor.* In ery newspaper, every day, local ws has brimmed with national poli-s as candidates attend Rotary eakfasts, Old Home Day parades, d senior citizens' coffee hours. In otographs every day we watch nator Bob Dole hoist an obliga-y baby; we see Representative ck Gephardt smile as he shakes a nd.

Some years back, a certain ex-gov-nor of Georgia started visiting New mpshire three years or so before the mary he was aiming at. Now cam-gning has become full time, but it ts up in the summer before the criti-February primary. By July of last r, 1988's candidates were swarm-as thick as blackflies in May. And weekly papers, with columns by ident stringers, were taking notice, xing the domestic with the nation-In August Sam Bigelow, who writes ut Andover for Franklin's *Journal-nscript,* varied the usual item—Velcome back to Don and Jackie Hazen, returning after a two-week trip down South"—by announcing:

> The Merrimack County Republican Committee will hold its annual barbecue picnic next Saturday from 2:00 to 5:00 P.M. at the home of Paul and Sharon Nagy, Chase Hill Road. . . Special guests, as of a couple of weeks ago, include Congressman Jack Kemp, Dr. Pat Robertson, General Alexander Haig, and Neil Bush.

We read the follow-up in the next Monday's *Concord Monitor:* General Haig and Representative Kemp both disliked the White House peace plan for Nicaragua; Elizabeth Dole suggested that her husband is best qualified to become "the leader of the free world"; Kate Hislop, identified as a little-known candidate, told us how we need to "cut the deficit, limit welfare, and deport illegal aliens"; Representative Kemp answered questions about superconductors and the Persian Gulf; General Haig punned: "Beware of Dole and Dole. It's only watered down pineapple juice"; Pat Robertson, who canceled, sent two ex–Denver Broncos to state his case; represented by his son, Vice President George Bush won the straw poll.

A week later the pretty town of Salisbury, on Route 4 a few miles south, celebrated its Old Home Day. This New Hampshire holiday—organized reunions for the dispersed citizens of the small towns—was proclaimed by the governor almost ninety years ago. Like everything else in New Hampshire, Old Home Day is a local option. Andover has none; Danbury and Wilmot hold theirs on sequent Sundays in August, each featuring Moulton's Band from Sanbornton ("continuous since 1889") in concert. In 1987 Salisbury's took place on Saturday, 15 August, with parade, picnic, and presentation of awards. Vice President Bush dropped by—the same day he dropped by Londonderry, Hopkinton, Webster, and New London—to award a clock to the eighty-year-old citizen of the year and to honor a young woman who won a national scholarship. The Old Home Committee started planning the day's events last March without considering a vice-presidential visit. Three weeks before the event the selectmen heard indirectly that Bush would like to take part. One selectman later allowed, "At first we were not inclined." Another explained, "We didn't want it to be their party and not our day." They went along when they decided that a vice president would add honor to the honorees.

In primary season, we are spoiled rotten. Don Marquis's phone keeps ringing; he handles social studies for Nashua secondary schools, and he hears himself saying, "No, Senator, no, I'm sorry. I told you, you can only speak to one assembly a year. . . " We meet them all if we want to. The weekend after Salisbury's Old Home Day, former Arizona governor Bruce Babbitt spoke at Daniell Point in Franklin, confluence of the Merrimack and Pemigewasset rivers, and argued for a national sales tax to reduce the deficit. He met Dick Smart, registered Republican for fifty years, who had just switched parties and said

nald Hall is poet laureate of New Hamp-e. His most recent book is Seasons at Eagle nd, *a collection of essays.*

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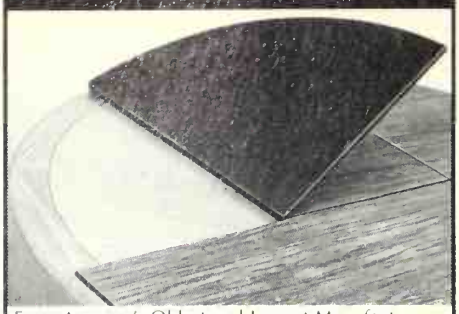

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how much he enjoyed the Democrat[ic]. He didn't have to wear a tie now; and in fifty years, he said, Republicans had never offered him wine.

The Manchester *Union* waited until December to choose former governor of Delaware Pete du Pont from among the Republican candidates—but until then it actually seemed more interested in knocking the governor of Massachusetts, Michael Dukakis. Sixteen years ago the *Union* ran a successful campaign against another New England favorite son, Maine's Edmund Muskie. Now the front page thundered, "Dukakis has pulled off one of the fastest and most underhanded skimming operations on Massachusetts taxpayers in the history of political money-grabbing. . . ." The issue was a pay raise.

Dukakis didn't seem to be around New Hampshire much last summer. Everybody else was: Gephardt would be at Dennis and Margie Fenton's one night soon; there was a number to call or you could just drop by. The *Union* one August morning, reminded us that Kemp would debate Gephardt at a college in Manchester the day after tomorrow. In the column headed "Campaign '88," we also read that a 1984 campaign coordinator for Mondale had signed on with Sen. Joseph Biden; Paul Laxalt of Nevada was in meeting with advisers at Bretton Woods (two days later he withdrew, a month later, Biden); the previous night Kemp attacked Dole again; Sen. Albert Gore was to meet with teachers in Concord for a 12:30 lunch, on Thursday, visit Daniell Point in Franklin for coffee at 4:00, and return to Concord sipping more coffee at 6:30; and Sen. Paul Simon would hit the Country Way nursing home in Keene today, at 6:00 meet the Democrats of Peterborough, at 7:30 more coffee in Goffstown.

In the common mercantile metaphor, politics in most of the country is wholesale. In New Hampshire, it is retail. Wholesale is television advertising. Retail is continual coffee in living rooms. It's fortunate for the candidates that nobody in this state stays awake after 9:00 P.M.

Which brings up, of course, the absurdity of this eccentric state taking so much importance on itself. Roy

ount Jr. tells about a Yankee who
ticized the South for the Confeder-
e flag; she bragged that the North
dn't need a flag, and Blount an-
ered that the North wasn't a *place*.
ew Hampshire is a place—as Mil-
lgeville is and Atlanta isn't—and
ong other things it is the place of
e first primary. Our self-chosen
inence turns to self-mockery. A
rtoon in the weekly Bristol *Enter-*
se, just after a town meeting in
arch 1987, shows a wife addressing
r downcast rustic husband: "So you
dn't get elected selectman. You can
ll run for President."

Everybody has stories to tell. Merle
own's father, known all over New
mpshire as the Cheese Man be-
use he sold cheddar at all the fairs,
naged to slip a hunk to JFK in
60; the inevitable letter thanked
m for the "welcome change from
mpaign fare." Merle and his wife
t both teach high school; dark-
rse candidates search out coffee
urs with high-school teachers. Four
ars ago—eight? twelve?—they
ked with Fred and LaDonna Harris,
th Annie and John Glenn. When
t finished talking with Annie two
les came up to her: "What did you
k about? What's your name?"
ortly thereafter she received a let-
addressing the issues mentioned.
ot since William Faulkner wrote me
ir letters with four different signa-
es, all postmarked New York while
lived in Virginia, have I received
many notes from important people.
Famous politicos cozy up to us,
ich infuriates flatlanders from New
rk and Massachusetts—which
kes it worthwhile. Mike Barnicle,
o apes Jimmy Breslin for the *Boston*
obe, can be counted on: "New
mpshire is to the country what
rry Manilow is to good music." On
e other hand, the *New York Times*
es writing *prose:* a few years back,
ncis X. Clines visited Danbury, on
e curving emptiness of Route 4."
interviewed five people and re-
rted their cynicism about politics
d politicians; two said they
uldn't even vote. (Back on Forty-
ond Street, of course, everybody
hes to the polls.)

New Hampshire Governor John
nunu calls politics our second-fa-

You deserve a factual look at . . .

Saudi Arabia

Does it support America's interests in the area?

Since the fall of the Shah and the great upheaval in Iran, we seem to have designated Saudi Arabia as our "ally", a country whose policies and goals are supposedly in accord with ours and that can be expected to promote our interests and policies in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf area. And Saudi Arabia is generally referred to as a "moderate Arab" nation.

What are the facts?

■ In the 1920's, American exploration firms discovered the world's largest oil fields under the eastern Saudi desert. As a result, the Saudis and their small neighbors became the richest nations in the world, far surpassing in per-capita product and income long established industrial nations. Not content with this enormous wealth, the Saudis spearheaded the creation of OPEC. It is a price-fixing cartel, which would be totally illegal under U.S. anti-trust laws. This cartel has managed to increase the price of oil by more than tenfold. In doing so, the members of OPEC — primarily Saudi Arabia — were able to amass almost unimaginable riches. At the same time, they caused grave economic dislocation to the Western industrial nations and brought ruin and famine to many of the so-called third world countries.

■ What do the Saudis do with all this wealth? Much of it goes to the maintenance of the most extravagant lifestyle of the Saudi "royal" house and hundreds of "princes" and their hangers-on. Some of it goes for ostentatious public projects. But much of it goes to bankrolling terrorists and troublemakers in the Middle East and in the rest of the world. For example, Saudi Arabia is the main support of the terrorist PLO, which would financially collapse were it not for Saudi Arabian aid. Saudi Arabia finances Syria to the tune of $750 million per year. Syria is a close ally of the Soviet Union, a state based on terror, and a sworn enemy of the U.S.

■ The Saudis have participated in every one of the Arab wars against Israel, since Israel's founding in 1948. They are totally committed to continued warfare until what they hope will be the destruction of Israel and "recovery" of Jerusalem. Saudi Arabia has systematically thwarted any peace initiatives to resolve the Arab-Israel conflict, continues to maintain a state of war with Israel, refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist, and perpetuates, through the Arab League boycott, an international economic warfare intended to strangle Israel.

■ The Saudis clamor constantly for more and more sophisticated weapons from the U.S. They claim to need these weapons in order to protect their kingdom, their oil installations, and the Gulf shipping lanes from the Iranians. They have purchased $2.9 billion of war materials from the U.S. and vast additional quantities from western Europe. But now that this arsenal is available and could be engaged, do they use it? Of course not! They call on the U.S. for help.

■ Because of their unwillingness to assist in their own defense, we have had so far to put thirty war ships in the area and thousands of U.S. sailors, whose lives are at risk. Why then, if they refuse to defend their own country, do the Saudis need all this expensive and deadly hardware? To quote the Saudi defense minister: "It is focused on Israel". And he was echoing King Khaled, who said: "When we build our military power, we have no designs on anybody except those who took away our land and holy places in Jerusalem, and we know who they are!". The way things seem to be planned by the Saudis, it may not be too long before their F-15's will join Syria's MIG 29's (also bought with Saudi money) to fight Israel's F-15's in another devastating Middle East conflagration.

■ Are the Saudis grateful to the U.S. for being so generous with weaponry and with protection? Despite the fact that the U.S. Navy is in the Gulf for their protection, the Saudis refuse to put any of their offshore installations and air bases at the disposal of the U.S. The cost to the U.S. taxpayer is a minimum of $200 million. Will the Saudis pick up any of that tab? Of course not! When the Iraqi fighter plane attacked the "Stark" and killed 36 American sailors, the U.S. urged the Saudis to pursue the Iraqi plane and to bring it down if necessary. What did the Saudis do? They flatly refused!

Saudi Arabia is not "moderate". It bankrolls Syria — the Soviet Union's ally and client state — and is the paymaster of the terrorist PLO. Its arsenal is not destined to the defense of its territory against Iran, but for the next "jihad" — what they hope will be the final war of extermination against Israel. They are no friends of America or of the West. They do not cooperate with us in the defense of our strategic interests — they single-mindedly pursue their own agenda. As to the "oil weapon", they wield it ruthlessly to amass the riches of the world and to disrupt the economies of the West.

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vorite indoor sport. And one of our oldest: Dennis Fenton—at whose house Gephardt talked late last summer—is an Andover selectman, my second cousin, and a good Democrat. His political flavor goes back to our great-grandfather John Wells, who was a Copperhead and hated Lincoln although he fought for the North. Gephardt retailed politics in the Fenton living room because a Danbury blacksmith believed in states' rights 130 years ago. When my grandfather and his brother (Dennis's grandfather) grew up, Democratic politics crowded the table with quarrels at noontime dinner and at supper. And when the South Danbury Debating and Oratorical Society met in 1897, as my grandparents courted, the younger set sang songs, played the piano, recited pieces, and debated "Resolved: That the United States Should Cease Territorial Expansion."

Politics remains retail in New Hampshire because of our system of government and the history that established it. The state was founded on distrust of anybody you could not look in the eye. Settled by refugees from theocratic Massachusetts, New Hampshire struggled in the eighteenth century to keep its identity. The northwestern part, the Connecticut River valley, was populated by emigrants from Connecticut and western Massachusetts who also resented rule from afar—from central New Hampshire, for instance. Distrust of government, be it federal or state, decided the way we govern ourselves. Our enormous legislature started late in the eighteenth century, to keep the Upper Valley from forming another state.

The New Hampshire House of Representatives marshals 400 members to govern a state whose population edged over a million just a couple of years ago. Everybody knows his representative; my grandfather, a Democrat among Republicans, was elected representative seventy-five years ago. Jimmy Phelps, down in Danbury, was elected selectman when he was nineteen, and ran for representative when he was twenty-seven; the people who voted him in had gone to school with him. We talk every Friday when I pick up my mail.

Like everybody else, we distrust politicians; unlike everybody else, we find it hard to avoid becoming politicians. There are so many offices. My second cousin Forrest Powers—another great-grandson of John and Martha Wells—is selectman in Danbury; his mother Edna spent twenty-one years being elected trustee over graveyards in Danbury. Once a year we elect these officers, the same day we convene at the town meeting to tax ourselves. If we don't like the way our roads are plowed, we vote out the town road agent whom we voted in the previous March.

Sometimes we hear that Boston television, beamed into southern New Hampshire with its dense population of Massachussetts emigrants, is changing New Hampshire politics. But ask Walter Mondale about this: four years ago he skipped coffee hours in favor of ads on television, while Gary Hart (now back, again) answered questions in living rooms. For some candidates the living rooms are the hard part. It was in a Claremont living room that Senator Biden, irritated at a question from a high-school teacher, boasted about his IQ and misrepresented his academic record.

But I suspect that these face-to-face encounters are good for them. In New Hampshire's primary season, candidates look in people's faces, not into cameras, when they answer questions; and the little red light does not snap off before the question is answered.

I arrived at the Fentons' to meet Dick Gephardt at 7:25. Cars were already dense; New Hampshire runs on its own time, the only place in the country where it is polite to be fifteen minutes early for dinner. The candidate was already there, wearing the uniform blue suit and red tie. One hundred twenty people ate cookies and drank coffee, standing around in the living room, dining room, kitchen, hallway, and garage. Representative Gephardt shook hands—smiling, serious, presidential. Maybe *too* presidential? He has been criticized for looking like the president of the senior class. He spoke for ten or fifteen minutes and then answered questions. The first came from an old man who had just shelled out $4,000 for a corneal implant that took four hospital hours. Later questions concerned the arms race, Nicaragua, and the Gulf war. Gephardt didn't evade them; it would have been hard to.

As I drove home late that night about 9:15, I thought about the privilege of the evening—to be repeated as other candidates would stand in other Andover houses, one of them doubtless our next President, addressing issues such as disarmament, import policy, the Gulf, and military adventurism. I suspect it's a useful thing. Newspapers set agendas; television *photographs* everything. But in New Hampshire we get to watch the candidates' eyes as they answer our questions; the rest of the country watches us watching.

February Index Sources

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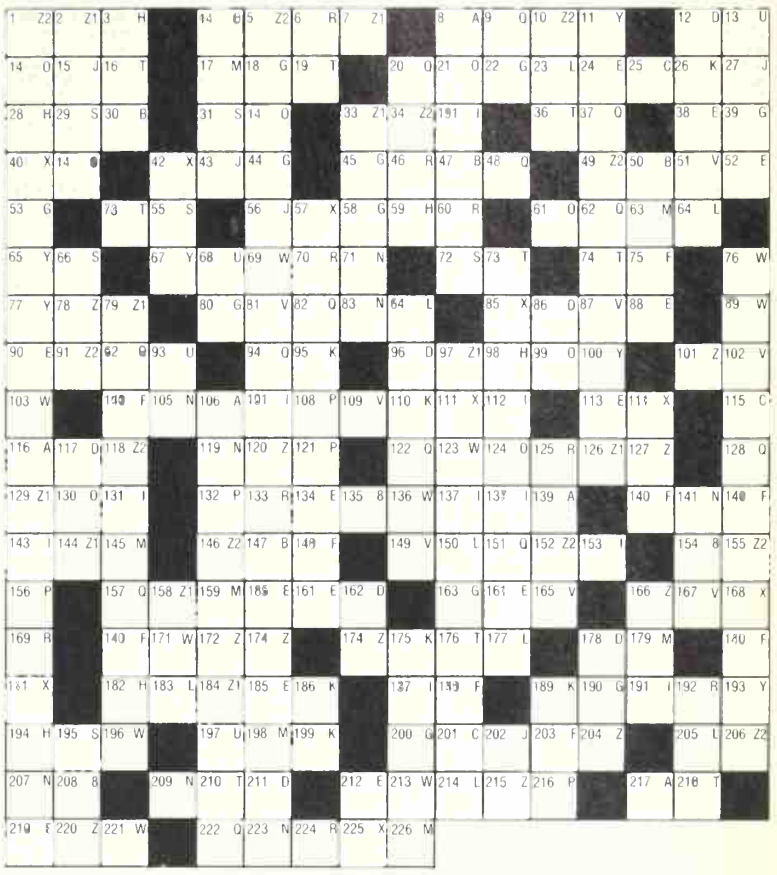
DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 62

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 79.



CLUES

A. Rend, divide
106 8 116 217 139

B. Stereotypical embodiment of a shrewd, frugal person (2 wds.)
4 47 219 147 208
30 154 50 135

C. Beer ingredient
164 201 115 25

D. Type of facial makeup (2 wds.)
96 117 211 12 86
178 162 32

E. Striking (hyph.)
185 88 52 212 90 113 38 24
161 134 170

F. Something owed
148 203 140 187 75

G. Advantageous conditions; favorable occasion
39 200 80 18 45 22 44 190
58 163 53

H. Birdlime, mistletoe genus
194 98 59 28 3 182

I. Common, usual
173 191 131 84 112 143 137 153

J. Range that includes Mt. Elbert
56 43 138 202 27 15 35

K. At full gallop
26 110 95 199 189 175 186

L. Type of shot
142 177 183 23 150 64 160 107
214 205 180

M. Type of scarf
159 198 17 179 63 145 226

N. Labored, marked by exertion
83 71 209 223 141 41 119 105
207

O. Anti-aircraft (hyph.)
21 99 14 124 61 130

P. Extreme contempt
216 132 108 121 156

Q. Ship's load line (2 wds.)
222 128 94 20 122 37 48 9
151 62 157 82

R. Swamp home for Walt Kelly's Pogo, Albert, etc.
192 125 92 70 60 6 133 224
169 46

S. Raw beginner, as on a ball team or in the army
66 72 55 29 31 195

T. Specialists in intimidation
54 176 16 19 210 73 74 218
36 188

U. Boor
93 68 13 197

V. Decoration
81 149 51 167 109 165 87 102

W. Perplexed, mad
196 76 103 123 136 171 69 89
213 221

X. Whines, makes an outcry
42 57 168 85 225 111 40

Y. Nickname of pitcher Lynwood Thomas Rowe (1910–61)
77 104 100 181 114 67 66
11

Z. Lapsus linguae involving transposition of letters
127 215 220 120 28 204 101
166 172

Z1. Quaver, half a crotchet (2 wds.)
158 129 144 97 79 33 184 2
7 126

Z2. 1908 Davis-Koschna song from *The Three Twins* (hyph. & wd. after The)
118 10 152 5 1 155 91 146
49 34 206

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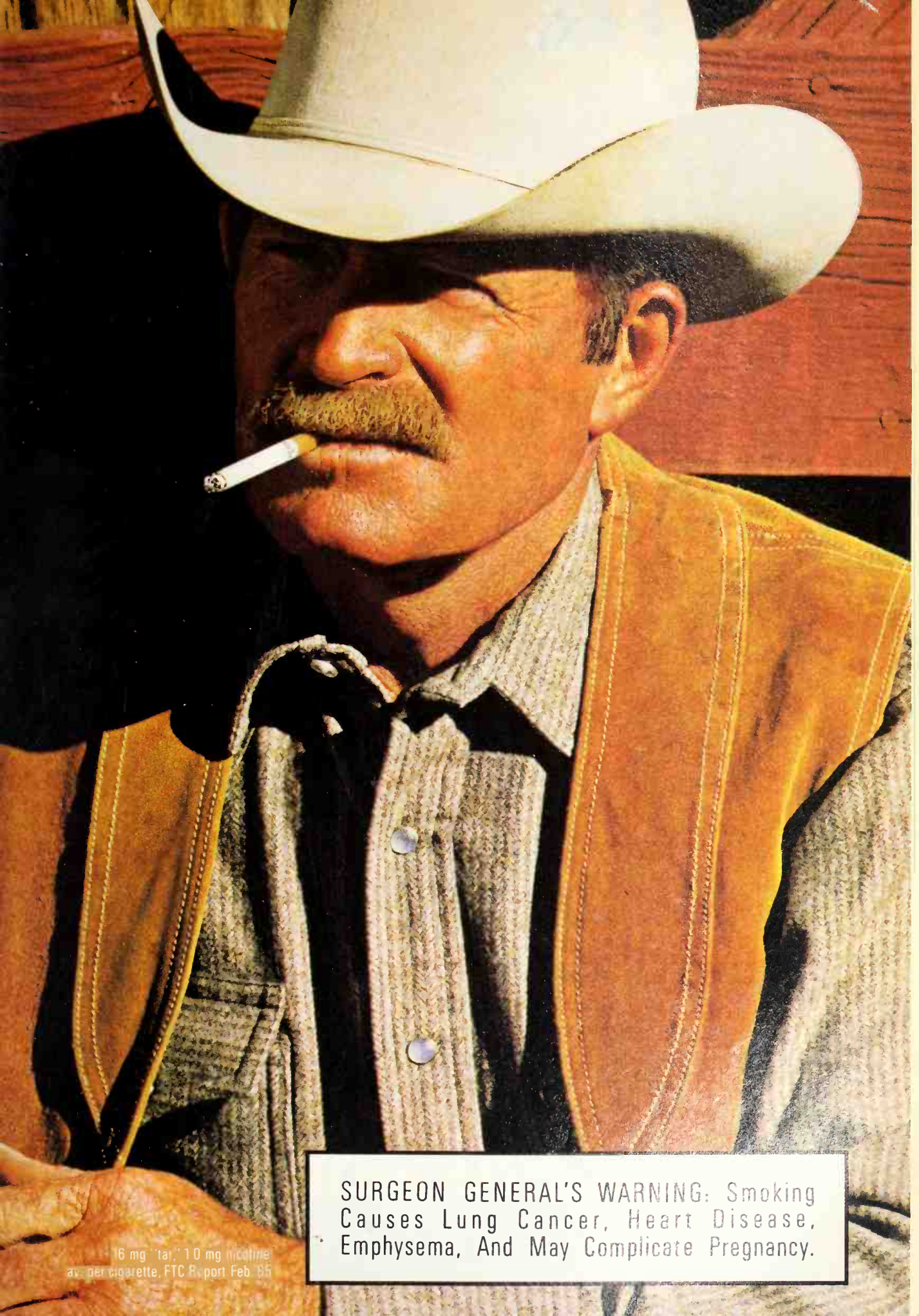
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LETTERS

The Unexamined Life

John Simpson's article [Iran Letter, "Along the Streets of Tehran," January] overflows with the mea culpa of the Western visitor who swallows, unexamined, the explanations of his host. I would expect this from a university undergraduate, but not from a journalist.

Simpson takes comfort in the words of an ayatollah who told him that "there were so many conditions that had to be fulfilled before a thief's hand could be severed that in practice it was almost impossible to impose amputation as a punishment." Am I supposed to be reassured?

In another bit of cultural relativism, Simpson tells us that whipping is a routine punishment for such offenses as possession of alcohol. Then he adds: "But it should be said that they [whippings, stonings, amputations] are carried out not only in Iran but in such 'moderate' states as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates." Does this lend respectability to these practices?

Simpson offers Jews and Armenians this consolation: "The Revolutionary Guards don't like Jews or Armenians much. But I have neither seen nor heard of any routine persecution of these minorities as there has been of the Baha'is, decent and devout people who regard their faith as an improvement on Islam, a dangerous belief in Iran." Is that all he has to say about the genocide of the Baha'is? Simpson even makes it seem that it is their fault. They hold a belief (not actions, just a belief) that is dangerous in Iran. Are they getting what they deserve then?

Simpson observes that Westerners misunderstand the position of women in Iran when they think that just because women are veiled they are oppressed. Not at all, he says: "And although on previous visits I have seen women wearing a bit of eye makeup approached on the street and lectured by members of a *komiteh* [local revolutionary committee], I noticed on my last visit that things had become more lax, at least for now. A few women wore makeup in the streets, and in many cases the *chadors* were shorter and less than all-embracing." Well, I guess that is better than a sharp stick in the eye.

Laina Farhat
Mountain View, Calif.

So John Simpson notes "the role of women in Iran is quite complex." *Chadors* are shorter nowadays, and a few women drive cars and wear makeup. Terrific. Mussolini made the trains run on time, and Hitler reduced unemployment.

Simpson's portrait of Tehran today

Harper's Magazine welcomes Letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters are subject to editing. Letters must be typed double-spaced; volume precludes individual acknowledgment.

s the white-male-journalist tradi-
on that devotes a few paragraphs to
lf the population—women—then
ncludes things aren't so bad. Maybe
t, for men.

But Iranian women—without ac-
ss to birth control, abortion, or
ual rights—are the unwitting pro-
nitors of the population explosion
at Simpson mentions in passing.
nd the young men dying in a ridicu-
us and futile war are their sons.

One wonders what a woman's view
life in Tehran would be. How must
feel to be eternally pregnant,
awning sons for the war machine,
ith little other choice in life? I sus-
ect a woman's view might include a
t more anger and outrage—and
ore real truth than Simpson's puff
iece.

laine Hopkins
eoria, Ill.

Humble Mousse

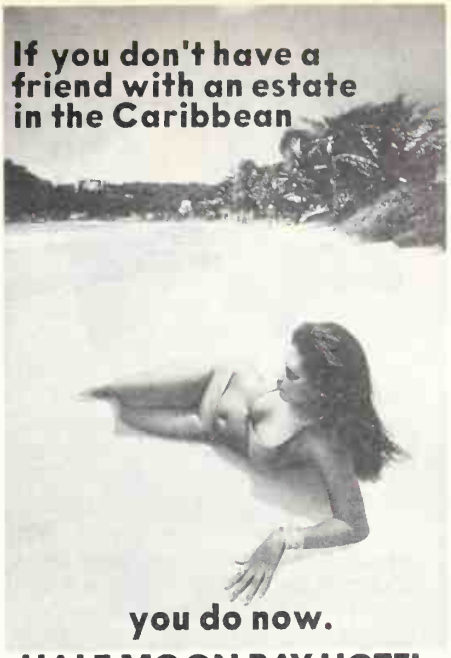
"Upon First Gazing Into Bergdorf's
Window" [Miscellany, by Peter
reundlich, December 1987] reminds
ne again that each generation be-
eves itself unique. The children of
very rich era want to set themselves
part.

But there are few or no servants
nese days, and ostentatious public
isplays and great shows of wealth and
ower are no longer possible. Our
ealthy may spend a lot, but they
annot do so in the same self-aggran-
izing way as the noble rich once did.
They are restricted by modern, work-
anlike bounds. Their scope is small
nd their efforts seem timid; our luxu-
y class must content itself with a Ro-
ex, a BMW, and a plate of angel-hair
asta.

. A. Tarapata
Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.

Situational Hate Mail

The hate mail that satirists such
s Alexander Theroux [Miscellany,
"Do Not Print This Letter," January]
eceive from literalists is only the tip
f the iceberg. The overwhelming
ajority of people never quite get up-
et enough to write to an author, and
f those who are mad enough, few



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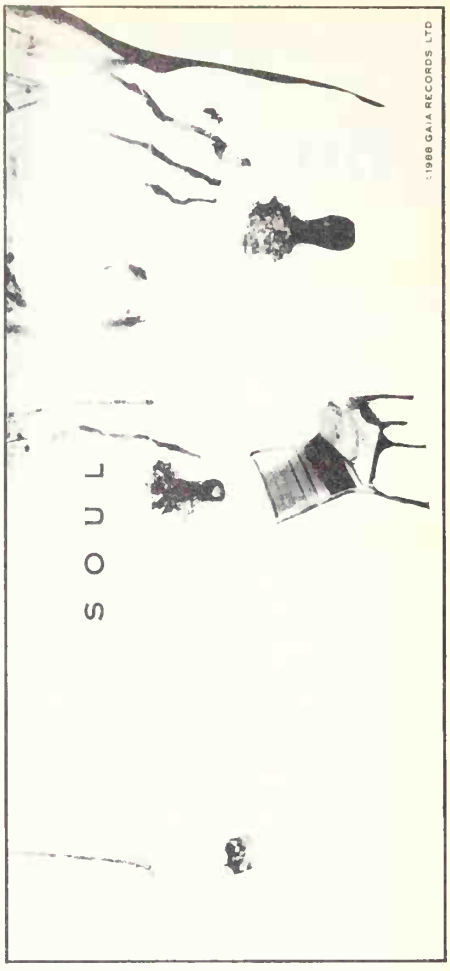

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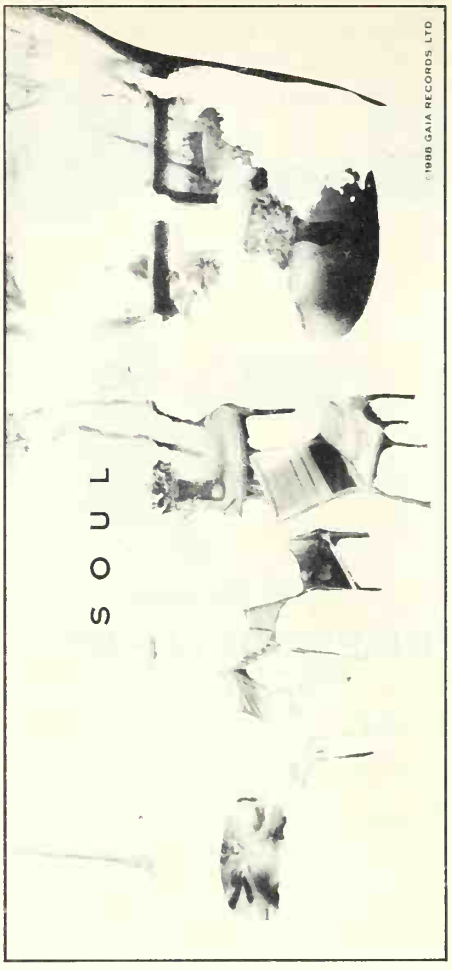


know how to get the enemy's addr

I once wrote an article suggest that America's situational ethics quired a "Situational Wedding S vice"—the bride and groom w exchange throwaway rings and kn in quicksand. I received protests fr as far away as North Dakota, an split a class of seminary students Louisville, Kentucky, as to wheth was serious, and was queried on latter point by a bishop in the Uni Methodist Church. But I never pot ed a mad minority behind all th only a sane and sincere majority whom irony, satire, and even m analogy are not viable modes of co munication.

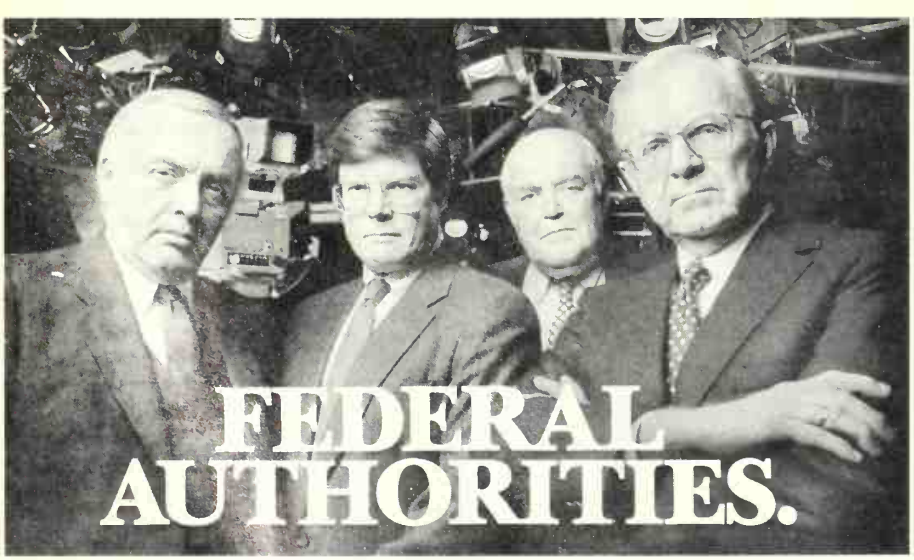
In former times, creative artists fr themselves an organic part of huma ity, its eyes and ears and voice. In d day, they peer out from under po dered wigs, bow and curtsy to ea other in a hall of mirrors, and lea humanity to find whatever eyes a ears and voice it can in paperback r mances and greeting-card poetry.

Yes, Theroux, the humiliation incomprehension does engender fe ings of loneliness and hatred a sometimes even erupts into ungra matical letters, but it's not because w ironists and satirists are "normal." W are merely an elite of an elite wh have devised a secret language for private world, and—however dem cratic our politics or genuine our com passion—we have no means of com munication with the real an tormented world beyond our literar porte cocheres. Thus, when an occa sional brickbat sails in and knocks ou powdered wigs askew, we can only ex change patronizing smiles and mur mur, "Ah, those crazies! There's on in every crowd."

Roy DeLamotte
Augusta, Ga.

Left-wing McCarthyism

Sam Dash is correct in saying that I viewed my role as that of counsel—not as client—to the U.S. Senate se lect committee in the Iran-*contra* hearings [Forum, "Hearing Nothing, Saying Nothing," February]. I offer no apology for that vision of my posi-



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on. No one elected me to the Con-
ess. My faith in democracy leads me
conclude that the American people
e best served by having judgments
d decisions made by elected and ac-
untable representatives, not staff
embers. My experience has rein-
rced that belief since the Iran-*contra*
mmittee's judgments were consis-
ntly fair and sound. I have never
isted people who claim a monopoly
truth or who sneer at politicians.
My mandate from the committee
as to develop the facts and to be ob-
ctive, not partisan. I would not
ve accepted the appointment under
y other conditions. Nobody placed
y obstacles in my path or gave me
y artificial deadlines. Every ap-
intment to the staff, including
homas Polgar, was subject to my ap-
oval. The vilification of him in the
rum is sheer McCarthyism—a style
at I eschewed in this investigation
d that is as offensive from the left as
om the right.

Finally, Daniel Schorr's comment
at "we have a report *cited* in order to
ove that the report doesn't contain
e information" is an epitaph with
hich any investigator would be satis-
d.

rthur L. Liman
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and abolish its racist policy of apartheid only when forced by economic sanctions. No higher human motive than greed or fear can be expected to dislodge the white South Africans from their catbird seat. Any rationalization necessary beyond the big lie—that those human beings with black skin are incapable of governing themselves—will be fabricated by the government to forestall that loss and will be gratefully quoted by the multinational corporations that also profit from the apartheid system.

Anyone who profits this South African company by advertising its stolen goods is supporting apartheid and decreasing the chances of a peaceful solution. One would expect, and certainly hope, that a thought-provoking magazine such as yours would not seek to promote acceptance of a racist regime that has an institutionalized system of human-rights abuse and racist exploitation.

Peter R. Sutliff
New York City

Ph.D.'s for the Nation

Did you mean Benjamin Barber's article [Criticism, "The Philosopher Despot," January] to be an illustration of Alexander Theroux's hate mail or a verification of Allan Bloom's contentions about Crank 'em Out U.? Barber confuses the reasonable democratic objective of an unbiased admissions policy with the dubious democratic ideal of a degree for everyone. That a college degree should mean more than a four-year residency is hardly elitist. Reducing the rigorous standards to obtain a college degree is democratic only in that it denies a college education to all.

Bloom does err about a declining interest in philosophy. Having reasoned itself into absurdity, modern philosophy no longer asks the perennial questions. So philosophy now thrives in the marketplace. "New Age" publications teem with philosophical intensity. Socrates would be proud.

"Openness" results from the failure of academics in general and philosophers in particular to grapple with the intellectually disturbing and logic-defying truths of non-rationalist worldviews. Fearing to contaminate impressionable minds, they simply teach them nothing.

Barbara Koval
Cambridge, Mass.

As a former student of Allan Bloom's, I found Benjamin Barber's critique of *The Closing of the American Mind* disappointing. Barber does not indicate where Bloom argues that universities should be closed or restricted, and I do not recall Bloom presenting that idea in his lectures. Barber also contradicts himself regarding how open or honest Bloom is. At first, Barber tells us that Bloom is highly deceptive, but then he calls some of Bloom's closing remarks "remarkably candid." Barber fails to address the difference between the equality of opportunity which democracy strives to provide and the inescapable inequality of gifts.

The issue is not about the existence of Truth, but about whether some answers are better than others. Barber seems to relish the leveling of all standards. Having heroes is a way of indicating *what* we value and of trying to develop the best in ourselves. In advocating a country that needs no heroes, Barber leaves us to be content with what we seem to have: a country that makes heroes out of people based on how well they look on television.

Philip Keddy
San Francisco

Benjamin Barber's witty riposte to Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* prompts, but cannot withstand, reflection. In setting democracy above Truth, Barber reveals how profoundly he has failed to understand the *meaning* of the trial and death of Socrates.

Neither democratic ideology nor the will of the minority can determine Truth. Democracy is not Truth; it *needs* Truth, which is manifested not in mere action but in action directed by thought.

It is Barber, rather than Bloom, who suffers from a naive nostalgia for the pure action of an unfallen, inno-

nt world. After Barber has relieved
of our philosophic longing for Soc-
tes' truth, where could he lead us?
aring—even in the form of demo-
atic ideology—is not enough.

y Wilson
rinceton, N.J.

rivial Pursuits

It is clear from the discussion on
Manufacturing the Next President"
orum, December 1987] that the na-
onal disgust with the nominating
ocess lies not with the process but
ith people such as Robert Beckel,
on Brown, Harrison Hickman, and
aymond Strother. Not once during
e entire Forum did any of the par-
cipants mention such niceties as is-
es, the value of what a candidate
inds for, his moral character, or
ch supposed anachronisms as na-
onal ideals and a sense of national
irpose.

The cynicism, cunning, and disin-
enuousness of these hip "game play-
s" is nauseating. You can almost
ear their mental gears grinding: let's
ave our candidate appeal to *these*
onstituents this week, with an en-
rely new platform for *another* spe-
al-interest group the next.

The schizophrenia of the Demo-
atic party is obvious after reading
e remarks of these strategists. They
e out of touch with the electorate
d have been for years. Perhaps this
xplains why the Democrats have lost
ur of the last five presidential
ections.

llan J. Hughes Jr.
obbs Ferry, N.Y.

G.O.P. Tar Baby

Pat Robertson's presidential cam-
ign [Report, "The Cultural Contra-
ctions of the G.O.P.," by Philip
Weiss, January] uses churches as a po-
tical base and promotes a sectarian
ligious agenda (outlawing freedom
conscience on abortion and push-
g government regimentation of
ayer in public schools). As such,
e campaign violates the spirit, if not
e letter, of the First Amendment.
st as bad, Robertson's efforts and
ose of Jerry Falwell and similar fun-

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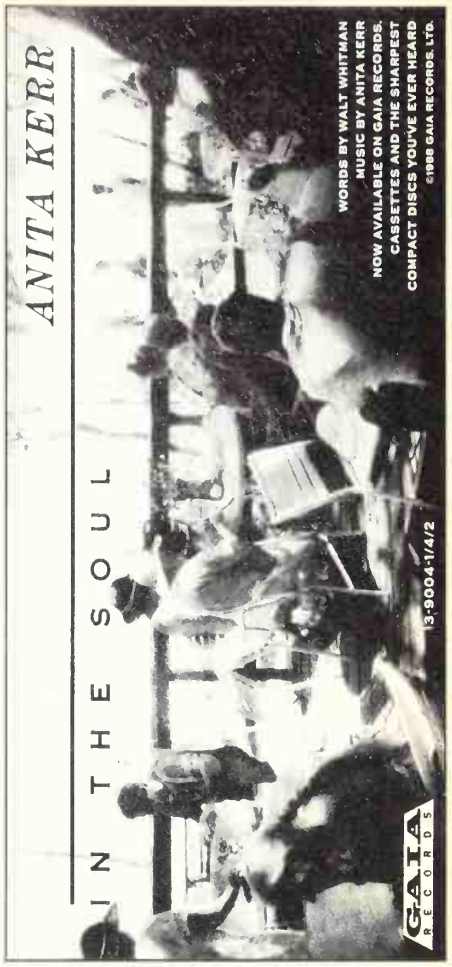

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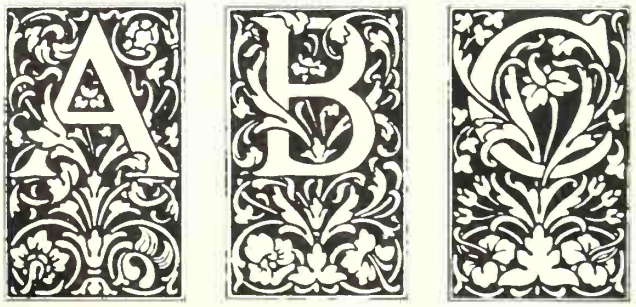

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damentalist leaders have handed the G.O.P. a tar baby.

At least the Democratic aspirants have the wisdom and courage to follow the lead of Jack Kennedy and Jimmy Carter in sticking fairly close to the constitutional ideal of separation of church and state.

Edd Doerr
Executive Director
Americans for Religious Liberty
Washington, D.C.

Please cancel my subscription to *Harper's Magazine* immediately. I found the Philip Weiss piece to be completely void of significance as either a political or cultural essay. The language used was intolerable; many paragraphs were disparaging and well beyond the bounds of good taste.

I also find fault with the editors. First, for even including "stuff" such as this. Second, for having the offbeat sense of humor to categorize the piece as a "Report." Your reputation as a magazine of quality has been tarnished.

James F. Morgan
Chico, Calif.

Rights to Buy

I must say that Morehead Kennedy's interpretation of the American Constitution as a document intended to promote purchasing power [Readings, January] left me quite unsettled. It is evident to me that his view is shared by millions of Americans who have allowed "the right to shop" to become their sole concern and have thus undermined the meaning of the word "freedom."

With such misconceptions, it is no surprise that most Americans cannot sympathize with the real struggles for freedom taking place throughout our world. Furthermore, if the right to shop does represent freedom, there are millions of people in the United States who are denied this "fundamental" right.

You might say that Kennedy is only a victim of such a misconception, but he has obviously *bought* it.

Ben Urízar
Rego Park, N.Y.

NOTEBOOK

A dwarf for all seasons

By Lewis H. Lapham

Man an' boy I've seen th' Dimmycratic party hangin' to th' ropes a score iv times. I've seen it dead an' burrid an' th' Raypublicans kindly buildin' a monymint f'r it an' preparin' to spind their declinin' days in th' custom house. I've gone to sleep nights wondhrin' where I'd throw away me vote afther this an' whin I woke up there was that crazy-headed ol' loon iv a party with its hair sthreamin' in its eyes, an' an axe in its hand, chasin' Raypublicans into th' tall grass. 'Tis niver so good as whin 'tis broke, whin rayspictable people speak iv it in whispers . . .

—Mr. Dooley

There is a demand today for men who can make wrong appear right.

—Terence

During the whole of the year prior to this season's primary elections, the troupe of presidential candidates received such unanimously bad press notices that it's fair to ask what the critics thought they had reason to expect. Against what standard of performance was the company of wandering mimes being measured? What ideal figure of the perfect politician did everybody have in mind?

Certainly the critics didn't feel hesitant about giving voice to their sarcasm and contempt. For twelve months the editorial pages of the nation's better newspapers offered condescending remarks about "the seven dwarfs" and "the car pool" on the Democratic side of the field and found among the Republicans either wimps or lunatics. The high-minded columnists complained about the candidates' lack of substance, charm, sense, force, wit, and stature.

Reduced to its fundamental harmonic structure, the criticism that filled the pages of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Wall Street Journal* could be stated as follows: "Who dares present us with loutish amateurs? What pigsty of a republic has the effrontery to send us so tawdry a band of would-be kings? Look at them in their identical blue suits and cheap red ties—aping the manners of their betters, mouthing inane promises, reciting lists of dreary statistics, boring us with their interminable debates, grinning their foolish, provincial grins. How can we take them seriously—we who have said good evening to Ted Koppel and discussed the weather with Donald Trump?"

When Gary Hart had the gall to return from oblivion, the tone of fluttering indignation ascended to the pitch of a falsetto whine. What was merely bad taste had become deliberate insult. The columnists clucked their tongues like dowager aunts reminding their nieces and nephews about the rules of sexual protocol and saying that the solemn ritual of a presidential campaign must not be turned into trivial burlesque. A. M. Rosenthal in the *New York Times* and Gail Sheehy on public television suggested that Hart might do well to consult a psychiatrist. The *New Republic* found Hart utterly devoid of *gravitas*, a sideshow freak who belonged not in the stately rooms of first-class celebrity but in the circus tent of the *National Enquirer* along with Elvis and Liz and Joan and the two-headed baby born in an alien galaxy.

The complaints betray a dismal ignorance of American history and a profound fear of the democratic idea. None of the latter-day critics apparently knows, or cares to remember, that most American presidents have proved themselves as resolutely second-rate as Benjamin Harrison, James Buchanan, Rutherford B. Hayes, Grover Cleveland, and Millard Fillmore.

During the middle passages of the nineteenth century the politician stumping through the American forest in search of a vote was already an object of ridicule. The Whig diarist, George Templeton Strong, noted as long ago as 1856 that the stump speech depended for its claptrap effect on "pathos and bathos delightful to see." Most stump speeches, he said, made him "sick and sore with laughter."

Then as now, elections had less to do with questions of grave consequence than with mummery and graft. William Henry Harrison carried the election of 1840 on the catchy but meaningless tune of a phrase, "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too," and in 1884 James G. Blaine, an eminent and self-satisfied Republican, lost the election because a preacher in his employ made the mistake of referring to the Democrats as the party of "rum, romanism and rebellion."

Nor, apparently, do the latter-day critics know, or wish to know, that in the arena of our national politics, mediocrity is the norm, not the exception. An American politician belongs, by right of birth, in the sawdust of the *National Enquirer*, to the ringmasters and gossipmongers who delight in Princess Di and write headlines that say SOVIETS FIND LOST CITY ON MARS or ANGRY WIFE PUTS PIRANHA FISH IN HUBBY'S BATHTUB or SUNBATHER BURSTS INTO FLAMES; ALL WE'VE GOT IS A SCORCHED BLANKET, BAFFLED POLICE SAY.

How could it be otherwise? Mediocrity is the common clay of the hu-

man condition. As in politics, so also in medicine, finance, and literature. Most people (i.e., the presiding majority) do not possess exceptional talents—not for making money, not for governing, not for writing sonnets or hitting baseballs. A state governed according to the whim of genius (i.e., by the exceptional minority) would descend within a matter of weeks into anarchy.

The democratic principle holds that the business of the state can be conducted by ordinary men, subject to the ordinary failures of character as well as to the moments of ordinary courage and intelligence. The lack of divine intervention in the affairs of men is what Lincoln meant by a government "of the people, by the people and for the people." It is what Mark Hanna meant when he compared President William McKinley to a tin railroad shed and what Joseph Alsop meant when he praised Richard Nixon as a "workable plumbing fixture."

Under this republican definition of government this season's primary candidates meet the historical standard of blind presumption. Governors Dukakis and Babbitt could stand in the shoes of presidents Garfield and Harding; so could Representative Gephardt, Vice President Bush, and General Haig. Each of the gentlemen also could do creditable duty as the president of Citibank, the editor of *Newsweek*, or the president of Yale University.

If their language is dull and their images too earnest, at least they make an attempt at substantive discussion and the teaching of impromptu civics lessons. Ten years ago the newspaper moralists complained about the superficiality of television advertising that summed up the nation's dream of heaven in thirty seconds of commercial agitprop. Now that the candidates endure the penance of debates, the critics find them as boring as the testimony in front of a school board or a tax commission—in sum, as tedious as any other honest labor of representative government.

Why then the mincing smirks among the political gentry in New York and Washington? Why do the elder statesmen of the Democratic party (people like Cyrus Vance and Robert Strauss and Walter Mondale) whisper to the media their disappointment in "the dwarfs" and "the car pool"? Why do the media devote so much of their limited span of attention to the two candidates—Jesse Jackson and Gary Hart—who stand not the slightest chance of winning next November's election? Why do they persist in imagining that Governor Mario Cuomo and Senator Bill Bradley—absent candidates as thoroughly mediocre as the ones already present—might somehow improve the presidential campaign with the facade of dignity?

The answer has to do with both the social and the financial motives of

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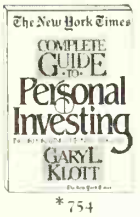

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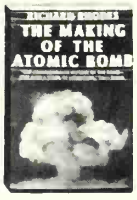

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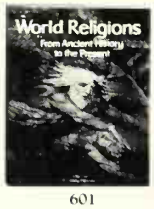

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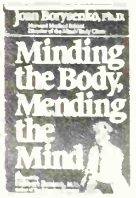

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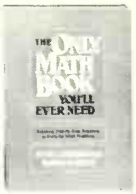

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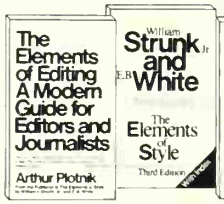
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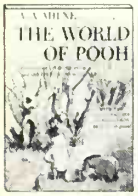

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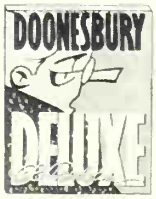

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what has become a privileged class. During the years of the American supremacy (roughly 1945 until the present), the country's leading plutocrats adopted the attitudes they thought consonant with their newly arrived importance as proconsuls of a newly arrived empire. Arrivistes of all denominations (whether merchants or literary intellectuals) never have much sense of humor, especially with regard to themselves, and it wasn't long before everybody who was anybody (in Washington as well as at CBS) forgot what could be reasonably expected of politics. They had learned to ride in limousines and comb their hair for the television cameras, and they didn't want to be reminded of two-headed babies or dancing bears.

Prior to the advent of Henry Luce's "American Century," the country's writers didn't feel obliged to confuse politicians with the equestrian statues in a public park. To his journal in 1853, Thoreau remarked: "The oldest, wisest politician grows not more human so, but is merely a gray wharf rat at last."

Mark Twain, Ambrose Bierce, and Mr. Dooley weren't much more sanguine, and Henry Adams, an appalled guest in Teddy Roosevelt's White House, while writing a letter to a friend in 1902, observed: "What makes a long residence in Washington so bad for one's temper is the horrible display of vanity, especially among the men. If ever, once, in all those forty years that I have known statesmen, I had met one solitary individual who thought, even at intervals, of anyone or anything but himself, I would forgive him as a sad example of human eccentricity, and say no word against him."

Nearer to our own time, Richard Reeves, a political columnist known for his occasional lapses into plain statement, said: "Politicians are different from you and me. The business of reaching for power does something to a man—it closes him off from other men until, day by day, he reaches the point where he instinctively calculates each new situation and each other man with the simplest question: What can this do for me?"

So unflattering an assay of a politician doesn't conform to the inflated expectations of the age. The current generation of patrons feels it deserves a political figure more in keeping with the splendor of its department stores—somebody suitable for framing in the pages of *Architectural Digest*, a statesman as grand as the Pan Am building and as wise as Alvin Toffler. The condescending tone of voice expresses the disgust of a nouveau-riche plutocracy for what it perceives to be the vulgarity of the common man as well as the rich man's deep-seated fear of popular—a.k.a. "democratic"—government. The happy few yearn for the proverbial man on horseback, the glittering Cae-

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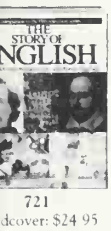

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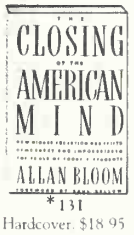

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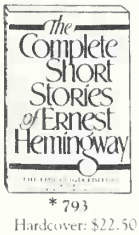

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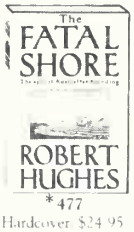

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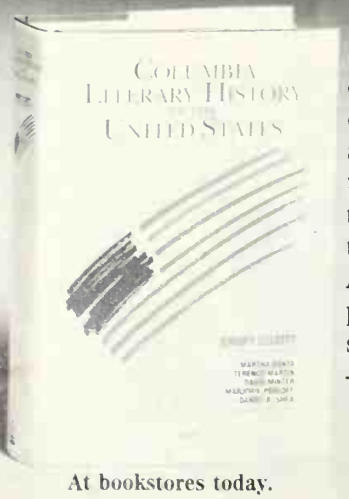

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sar who will astonish them with his resemblance to Mick Jagger or John Wayne and relieve them of their boredom.

The ceaseless belittling of the primary campaigns also expresses the wish to take the presidential nomination back into the back room. Back where it safely and properly belongs—among the people who, by virtue of subscribing to *Newsweek* and knowing the difference between clams oreganato and Julian Schnabel, congratulate themselves on the refinement of their taste in politicians. If no candidate comes to the convention with enough votes to ensure his nomination, then the dealers in influence can divide the spoils without having to bargain with the agents of an illiterate mob.

Once the candidate has been anointed, of course, the laughter stops. Candidates can be seen as clowns in primary campaigns, but not in general elections. What was a domestic comedy becomes, overnight, a solemn romance.

Prior to his appointment as Richard Nixon's successor in the summer of 1974, Vice President Gerald Ford had been perceived as an amiable but stupid congressman as likely to fall off a dais as to walk into a glass door. Once arrived in office, Ford was assigned—together with the Marine guard, the nuclear codes, and the Great Seal of the United States—a reputation for sagacity. Nobody went quite so far as to describe him as a philosopher-king, but the Washington press corps immediately recognized in him the lineaments of the homely wisdom traditionally ascribed to rural folk and the singers of country songs.

The media perform the ritual of purification, changing the worm into a butterfly and telling their patrons that a giant has been born. Let a single name emerge from the confusion in Iowa and New Hampshire, and within a matter of hours the hagiographers at *Time* magazine will begin to write the autumn fairy tale—the free world trembling in the balance, questions of grave significance caught in the telecommunications nets, the marsh lights of power glimmering in the Washington mist. The man who can make wrong appear right must first be dressed up in the veils of innocence. ■

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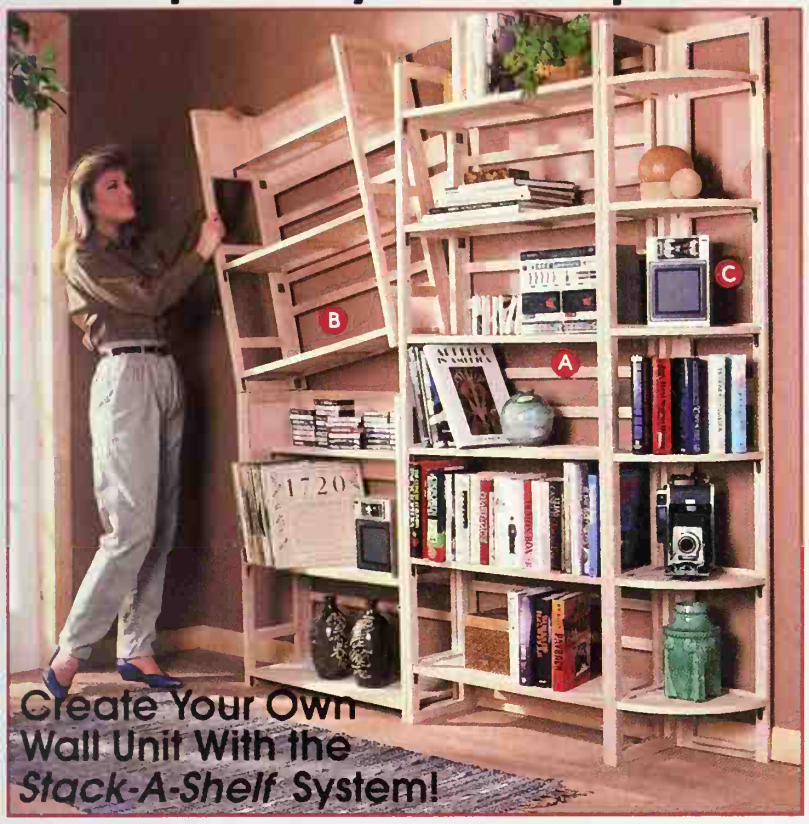

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HARPER'S INDEX

Annual cost to the Israeli treasury of guarding Ariel Sharon's East Jerusalem home : $850,000
Percentage of land in the West Bank that is owned by Israelis : 40
Average yearly number of violent demonstrations since 1982 by Palestinians under Israeli occupation : 3,000
Percentage of 1988 U.S. foreign economic aid that will go to Israel, Egypt, and the Philippines : 68
Number of candidates in the Philippines' January regional elections who were murdered during the campaign : 39
Number of privately owned machine guns in the United States : 183,895
Percentage of Southern households that own guns : 54
Rank of Miami in prune juice consumption per household : 1
Number of Americans 65 or older who are arrested each day for drunkenness and disorderly conduct : 63
Number of Soviet sites that have had the word "Brezhnev" removed from their name this year : 4
Price of a *perestroika* button from a Moscow street vendor : $1.60
Percentage of an Olympic gold medal that is gold : 3
Value of a B-1 bomber's weight in silver, expressed as a percentage of an actual bomber's cost : 6
Amount the Army is spending on 1,100 canvas and plastic decoy M-1 tanks : $3,630,000
Number of toll-free calls received by the Army's spy informant hotline in the past year : 19,000 (see page 26)
Percentage of contributors to George Bush's 1988 campaign who gave $250 or more : 25
Percentage of contributors to Jesse Jackson's campaign who did : 9
Percentage of black voters who consider George Bush the "craziest" candidate : 13
Number of American blacks who commit suicide each year (per 100,000) : 6
Number of whites : 13 (see page 47)
Percentage of individual investors who did not sell any stock in the two weeks following the October crash : 87
Percentage of Americans who rank the stock-market crash as the most important problem facing America today : 2
Percentage of the United States' 1988 budget that will be spent servicing its debt : 20
Percentage of Mexico's 1988 budget that will be spent servicing its debt : 31
Average number of attempts a Mexican makes before successfully crossing the U.S. border and landing a job : 3
Percentage of the top sixty Republican presidential campaign aides who are black or Hispanic : 0
Percentage who are white males : 87
Estimated number of employees on the congressional payroll who are relatives of representatives or senators : 74
Number of leeches sold last year to American surgeons and hospitals by Leeches USA : 10,000
Pounds of pesticide produced in America each year (per capita) : 11
Estimated number of styrofoam cups an American uses each year : 100
Percentage of the cargo shipped from the Port of New York that is wastepaper : 45
Amount spent by South Korea in 1986 for American wastepaper : $103,539,420
Amount spent by Americans in 1986 in adoption fees for South Korean babies : $31,270,000
Percentage of the foreign babies adopted by Americans that come from Africa : .1
Number of contestants in the Guinea-Bissau National AIDS Song Contest : 23
Number of reported cases of AIDS in Guinea-Bissau : 16
Percentage of Africa that is wilderness : 30
Percentage of North America that is : 36
Number of moose that have used the Anchorage moose underpass since it opened last fall : 6

Figures cited are the latest available as of January 1988. Sources are listed on page 76.
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IT'S SOBERING TO THINK THAT KIDS TAKE DRIVING MORE SERIOUSLY THAN SOME ADULTS.

READINGS

[Sermon]

THE PROFIT IN WORK'S PLEASURE

From a sermon delivered by Wendell Berry at New York City's Cathedral of St. John the Divine on November 8, 1987. Berry's most recent book is Home Economics, *a collection of essays published by North Point Press.*

To those who still feel an attachment to the traditions of religious and political thought that influenced the shaping of our society and the founding of our government, it is astonishing, and of course discouraging, to see economics now elevated to the position of ultimate justifier and explainer of all the affairs of our daily life, and competition enshrined as the sovereign principle and ideal of economics.

As thousands of small farms and small local businesses of all kinds falter and fail under the effects of adverse economic policies, or live under the threat of what we complacently call "scientific progress," the economist announces pontifically to the press that "there will be some winners and some losers"—as if that might justify and clarify everything, or anything. The sciences, one gathers, mindlessly serve economics, and the humanities defer abjectly to the sciences. All assume, apparently, that we are in the grip of economic laws, which are the laws of the universe. The newspapers quote the economists as the ultimate authorities. We read their pronouncements, knowing that the last word has been said.

The question we need to answer today is a practical one, though it is not one that is entirely answerable by empirical methods: Can a nation *afford* this exclusive rule of competition, this purely economic economy? The great fault of this approach to things is that it is so drastically reductive; it does not permit us to live and work as human beings, as the best of our inheritance defines us. Rats and roaches live by competition under the law of supply and demand; it is the privilege of human beings to live under the laws of justice and mercy.

What the ideal of competition most flagrantly and disastrously excludes is affection. The affections, John Ruskin said, are "an anomalous force, rendering every one of the ordinary political economist's calculations nugatory; while, even if he desired to introduce this new element into his estimates, he has no power of dealing with it; for the affections only become a true motive power when they ignore every other motive power and condition of political economy."

I would like to attempt to talk about economy from the standpoint of affection—or, as I am going to call it, pleasure, advancing just a little beyond Ruskin's term, for pleasure is, so to speak, affection in action. There are obvious risks in approaching an economic problem by a way that is frankly emotional—to talk, for example, about the pleasures of nature and the pleasures of work. But these risks seem to me worth taking, for what I am trying to deal with here is the grief that we increasingly suffer as a result of the loss of those pleasures.

It is obviously necessary, at the outset, to make a distinction between pleasure that is true

or legitimate, and pleasure that is not. We know that a pleasure can be as heavily debited as an economy. Some people undoubtedly thought it pleasant, for instance, to have the most onerous tasks of their economy performed by black slaves. But this proved to be a pleasure that was temporary and dangerous. It lived by an enormous indebtedness that was inescapably to be paid, not in money, but in misery, waste, and death. The pleasures of fossil-fuel combustion and nuclear "security" are, as we are beginning to see, similarly debited to the future.

That there is pleasure in competition is not to be doubted. We know from childhood that winning is fun. But we probably begin to grow up when we begin to sympathize with the loser—that is when we begin to understand that competition involves costs as well as benefits. Sometimes, perhaps, as in the most innocent games, the benefits are all to the winner and the costs all to the loser. But when the competition is more serious, when the stakes are higher and greater power is used, then we know that the winner shares in the cost, sometimes disastrously. In war, for example, even the winner is a loser. And this is equally true of our present economy: in an unlimited economic competition, the winners are losers; that they may appear to be winners is owing only to their temporary ability to charge their costs to other people or to nature.

But a victory over community or nature can be won only at everybody's cost. For example, we now have in the United States many landscapes that have been defeated—temporarily or permanently—by strip mining, by clear-cutting, by poisoning, by bad farming, or by various styles of "development" that have subjugated their sites entirely to human purpose. These landscapes have been defeated for the benefit of what are assumed to be victorious landscapes: the suburban housing developments and the places of amusement (the park systems, recreational wildernesses, etc.) of the winners, so far, in the economy. But these victorious landscapes and their human inhabitants are already paying the costs of their defeat of other landscapes: in air and water pollution, overcrowding, inflated prices, and various diseases of body and mind; eventually, the cost will be paid in scarcity or want of necessary goods.

Is it possible to look beyond this all-consuming rush of winning and losing, to the possibility of countrysides, a nation of countrysides, in which use is not synonymous with defeat? It is. But in order to do so we must consider our pleasures. Since we all know, from our own and our nation's experience of some pleasures that are canceled by their costs, and of some that result in unredeemable losses and miseries, it is natural to wonder if there may not be such phenomena as *net* pleasures, pleasures that are free or without a permanent cost. We know that there are. These are the pleasures that we take in our own lives, our own wakefulness in this world, and in the company of other people and other creatures—pleasures innate in the Creation and in our own good work. And these are the pleasures that are most vulnerable to so-called economic progress.

"This curious world we inhabit is more wonderful than convenient; more beautiful than it is useful; it is more to be admired and enjoyed than used." Henry David Thoreau said that to his graduating class at Harvard in 1837. We may assume that to most of them it sounded odd, as to most of the Harvard graduating class of 1988 it undoubtedly still would. But perhaps we will be encouraged to take him seriously, if we recognize that this idea is not something that Thoreau made up out of thin air. When he uttered it, he may very well have been remembering Revelation 4:11: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." This bountiful and lovely thought that all creatures are pleasing to God—and potentially pleasing, therefore, to us—is unthinkable from the point of view of an economy divorced from pleasure, such as the one we have now, which completely discounts the capacity of people to be affectionate toward what they do and what they use and where they live and the other people and creatures with whom they live.

It may be argued that our whole society is more devoted to pleasure than any whole society ever was before, that we support in fact a great variety of pleasure industries and that these are thriving as never before. But that would seem only to prove my point. That there can be pleasure industries, exploiting our apparently limitless inability to be pleased, can only mean that our economy is divorced from pleasure, and that pleasure is gone from our workplaces and our dwelling places. Our workplaces are more and more exclusively given over to production, and our dwelling places to consumption. And this accounts for the accelerating division of our country into defeated landscapes and victorious (but threatened) landscapes.

More and more, we take for granted that work must be destitute of pleasure. More and more, we assume that if we want to be pleased we must wait until evening, or the weekend, or vacation, or retirement. More and more, our

"Have a good day at the lab, dear?"

From Truth, *a new British monthly.*

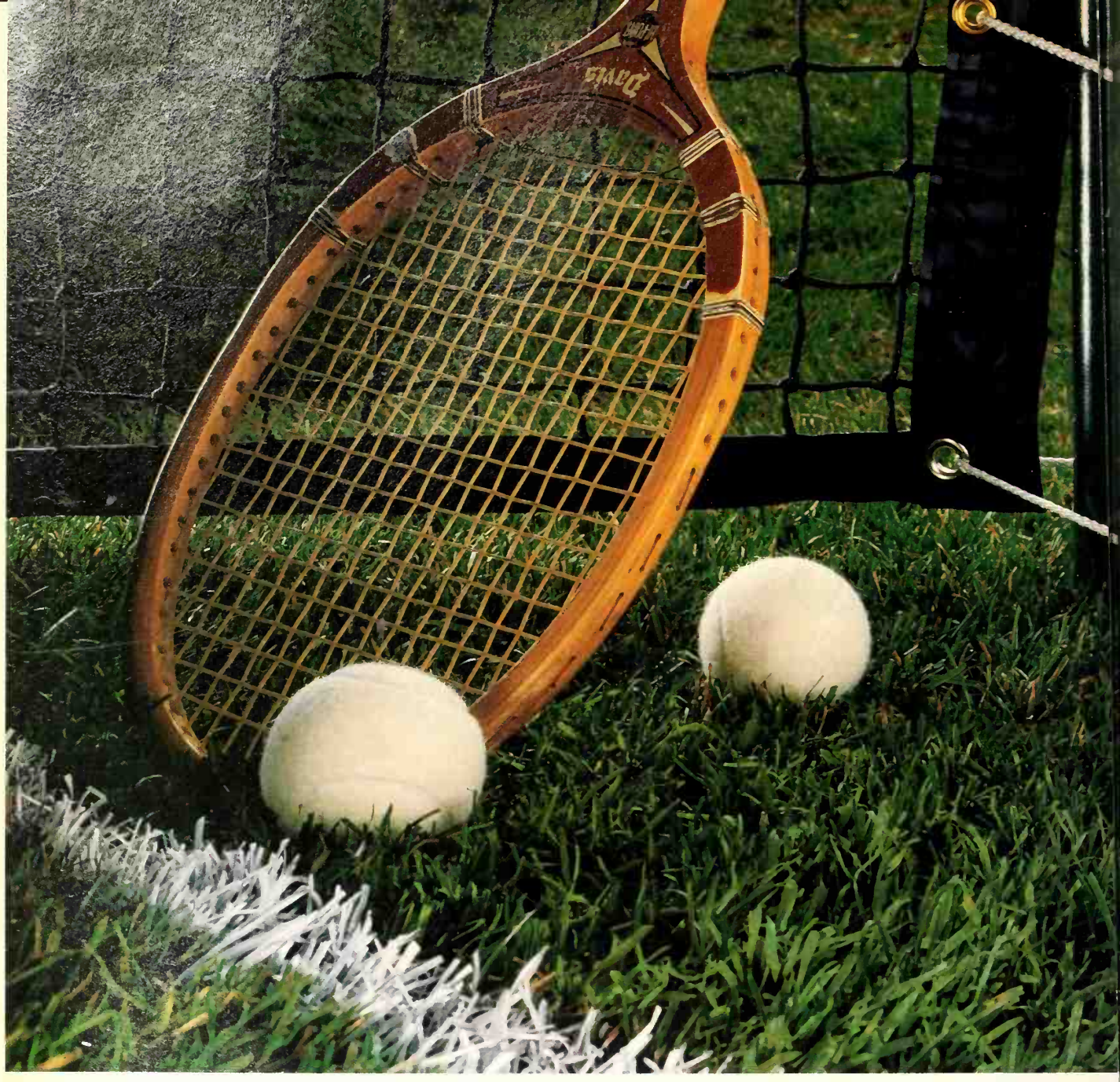
farms and forests resemble our factories and offices, which more and more resemble prisons. Why else should we be so eager to escape them? We recognize defeated landscapes by the absence of pleasure from them. We are defeated at work because our work gives us no pleasure. We are defeated at home because we have no pleasant work there. We turn to the pleasure industries for relief from our defeat, and are again defeated, for the pleasure industries can only thrive and grow upon our dissatisfaction with them.

Where is our comfort but in the free, uninvolved, finally mysterious beauty and grace of this world that we did not make, that has no price, that is not our work? Where is our sanity but there? Where is our pleasure but in working and resting kindly in the presence of this world?

In the right sort of economy our pleasure would not be merely an addition or by-product or reward; it would be both an empowerment of work, and its indispensable measure. Pleasure, Ananda Coomaraswamy said, *perfects* work. In order to have leisure and pleasure, we have mechanized and automated and computerized our work. But what does this do but divide us ever farther from our work and our products—and, in the process, from one another and the world? What have farmers done when they have mechanized and computerized their farms? They have removed themselves and their pleasure from their work.

I was fortunate, late in his life, to know Henry Besuden of Clark County, Kentucky, the premier Southdown sheep breeder and one of the great farmers of his time. He told me once that his first morning duty in the spring and early summer was to saddle his horse and ride across his pastures to see the condition of the grass when it was freshest from the moisture and coolness of the night. What he wanted to see in his pastures at that time of year, when his spring lambs would be fattening, was what he called "bloom"—by which he meant, not flowers, but a certain visibility of delectability. He recognized it, of course, by his delight in it. He was one of the best of the traditional livestockmen—the *husbander* or *husband* of his animals. As such, he was not interested in "statistical indicators" of his flock's "productivity"; he wanted his sheep to be pleased. If they were pleased with their pasture, they would eat eagerly, drink well, rest, and grow. He knew their pleasure by his own.

The nearly intolerable irony in our dissatisfaction is that we have removed pleasure from our work in order to remove "drudgery" from our lives. If I could pick any rule of industrial economics to receive a thorough re-examination, it would be the one that says that all hard



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SO
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physical work is "drudgery" and not worth doing. There are of course many questions surrounding this issue: What is the work? In whose interest is it done? Where and in what circumstances is it done? How well and to what result is it done? In whose company is it done? How long does it last? And so forth. But this issue needs to be re-examined by everybody, because it is personal. The argument, if it is that, can proceed only by personal testimony.

I can say, for example, that the tobacco harvest in my own home country involves the hardest work that I have done in any quantity in my life. In most of the years of my life, from early boyhood until now, I have taken part in the tobacco cutting. This work usually occurs sometime between the last part of August and the first part of October. Usually the weather is hot; usually we are in a hurry; the work is extremely demanding, and often, because of the weather, it has the character of an emergency. Because all of the work still must be done by hand, this event has maintained much of its old character; it is very much the sort of thing the agriculture experts have in mind when they talk about freeing people from drudgery.

That the tobacco cutting *can* be drudgery is obvious. If there is too much of it, if it goes on too long, if one has no interest in it, if one cannot reconcile oneself to the misery involved in it, if one does not like or enjoy the company of one's fellow workers, then drudgery would be the proper name for it.

But for me, and I think for most of the men and women who have been my companions in this work, it has never been drudgery. None of us would say that we take pleasure in all of it all the time, but we do take pleasure in it, and sometimes the pleasure can be intense and clear. Many of my best memories come from these times of hardest work.

The tobacco cutting is the most protracted social occasion of our year. Neighbors work together; they are together all day every day for weeks. The quiet of the work is not much interrupted by machine noises, and so there is much talk. There is the talk involved in the management of the work. There is incessant speculation about the weather. There is much laughter; because of the unrelenting difficulty of the work, everything funny or amusing is relished. And there are memories.

The crew to which I belong is the product of kinships and friendships going far back; my own earliest associations with it occurred nearly forty years ago. And so as we work we have before us not only the present crop and the present fields, but other crops and other fields that are remembered. The tobacco cutting is a sort of ritual of remembrance. Old stories are retold; the dead and the absent are remembered. Some of the best talk I have ever listened to I have heard during these times, and I am especially moved to think of the care sometimes taken to speak well—that is, to speak fittingly—of the dead and the absent. The conversation, one feels, is ancient. Such talk in barns and at row ends must go back without interruption to the first farmers. How long it may continue is now an uneasy question; not much longer, perhaps, but we do not know. We only know that while it lasts it can carry us deeply into our shared life and the happiness of farming.

(I am perforce aware of the problems and the controversies about tobacco. I have spoken of the tobacco harvest here simply because it is the only remaining farm job in my part of the country that still involves a traditional neighborliness.)

Ultimately, in the argument about work and how it should be done, one has only one's pleasure to offer. It is possible, as I have learned again and again, to be in one's place, in such company, wild or domestic, and with such pleasure, that one cannot think of another place that one would prefer to be, or of another place at all; one does not miss or regret the past, or fear or long for the future. Being there is simply all, and is enough. Such times give one the chief standard and the chief reason for one's work.

Last December, when my granddaughter, Katie, had just turned five, she stayed with me one day while the rest of the family were away from home. In the afternoon we hitched a team of horses to the wagon and hauled a load of dirt for the barn floor. It was a cold day, but the sun was shining; we hauled our load of dirt over the tree-lined gravel lane beside the creek—a way well known to her mother and to my mother when they were children. As we went along, Katie drove the team for the first time in her life. She did very well, and she was proud of herself. She said that her mother would be proud of her, and I said that I was proud of her.

We completed our trip to the barn, unloaded our load of dirt, smoothed it over the barn floor, and wetted it down. By the time we started back up the creek road the sun had gone over the hill and the air had turned bitter. Katie sat close to me in the wagon, and we did not say anything for a long time. I did not say anything because I was afraid that Katie was not saying anything because she was cold and tired and miserable and perhaps homesick; it was impossible to hurry much, and I was unsure how I would comfort her.

But then, after a while, she said, "Wendell, isn't it fun?"

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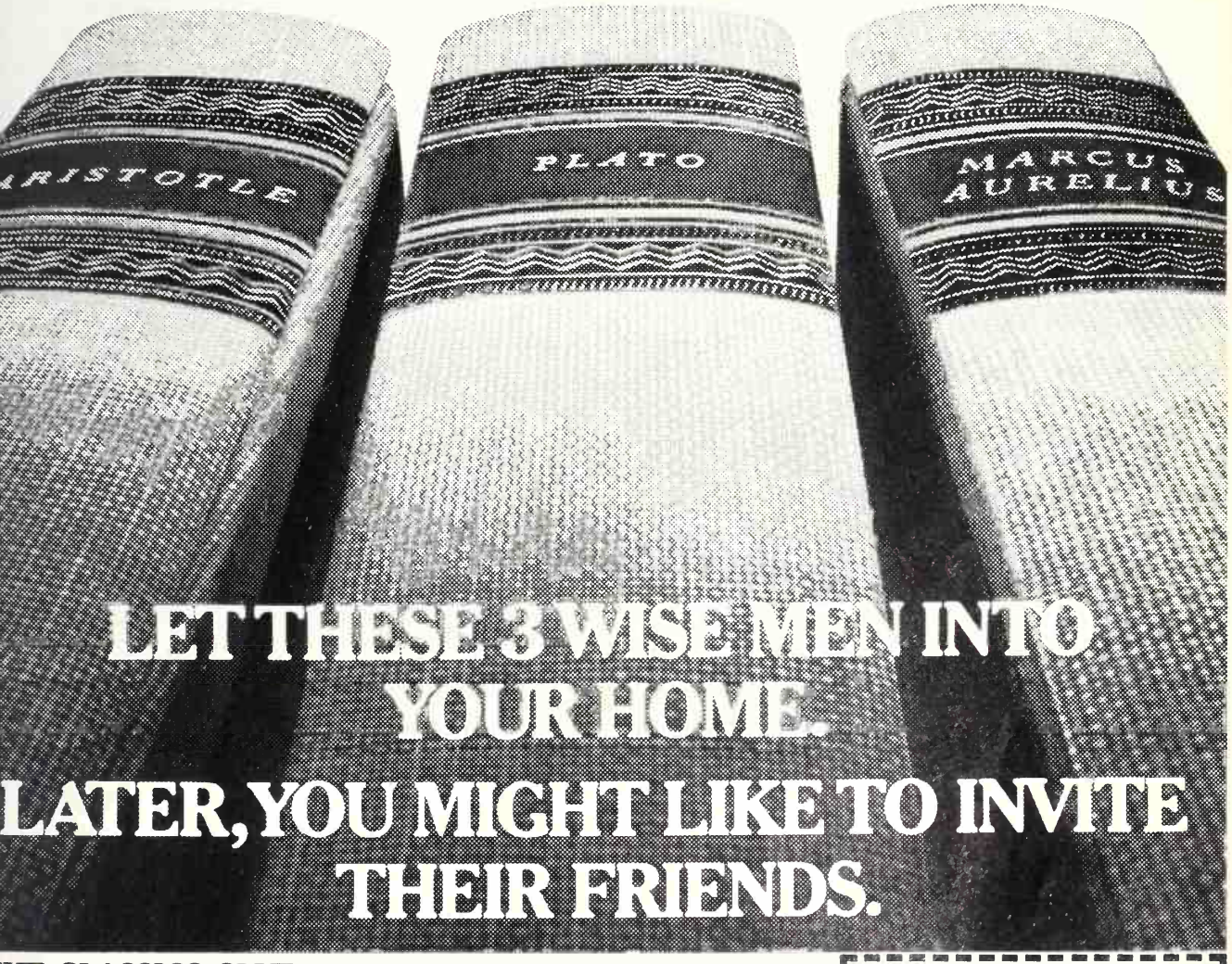

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[Letter]

PROFESSOR SPOOK

From a letter written last summer by Stanley Moskowitz, chairman of the CIA Training Selection Board, to Professor Dean Mann, then chairman of the political science department at the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB). Moskowitz directs a new CIA program that offers agents to universities as visiting scholars. Three other universities, including Georgetown and the University of Texas at Austin, have so far accepted an "Officer-in-Residence." George Chritton Jr., the thirty-year CIA veteran selected by the agency for UCSB, received a one-year appointment as a "visiting fellow." Thirty-eight students were arrested in a November protest against the appointment. The letter was recently released by the university to a journalist investigating the program.

Dear Professor Mann:

The Central Intelligence Agency is pleased to learn that the University of California at Santa Barbara is interested in accepting an Officer-in-Residence as part of its faculty. Our nominee to your school is Mr. George A. Chritton Jr. We would appreciate your considering him for a position in the College of Letters and Science in the political science department. A curriculum vitae on Mr. Chritton is enclosed.

The Central Intelligence Agency's Officer-in-Residence Program provides an opportunity for senior-level officers to disengage from their normal duties by fully participating in the academic life, including research and teaching. The Officer-in-Residence, who is identified as a CIA officer, by his presence will demonstrate the quality of CIA people and our commitment to providing U.S. leaders with the very best intelligence we can. The program also serves to strengthen our professional ties to a fertile and indispensable source of ideas and technical expertise and to enhance the CIA's recruiting efforts by providing an opportunity for experienced officers to serve as role models, to counsel interested students on career opportunities with the CIA, and to respond to concerns students may have about the agency and the intelligence profession.

The university will gain an officer who can effectively provide practical knowledge and experience to the institution and students. The officer is assigned without cost to your institution. All funds are provided by the Central Intelligence Agency. . . .

[Anecdote]

RONNIE'S BIG DAY

From Behind the Scenes, *by Michael K. Deaver, published last month by William Morrow.*

On the morning of the inaugural, I arrived at the Blair House shortly before 9:00 A.M. to help the Reagans prepare for the ceremonies. When I walked in, Nancy was getting her hair done. I said, "Where's the governor?"

Without moving her head, she said, "I guess he's still in bed."

"In bed?" I repeated. "If it was me, if I was about to become president of the United States, I don't think I could still be asleep at nine o'clock on the morning of my swearing in."

I opened the door to the bedroom. It was pitch-dark, the curtains still drawn, and I could barely make out a heap of blankets in the middle of the bed. I said, "Governor?"

"Yeah?"

"It's nine o'clock."

"Yeah?"

"Well, you're going to be inaugurated in two hours."

"Does that mean I have to get up?"

[Leaflet]

1-800-CALL-SPY

From a flyer recently distributed to all Army personnel by the Army Intelligence and Security Command. The hotline has received 19,000 calls since it was established last winter.

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2. DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE who is called at work by someone with a foreign accent who refuses to give a name or leave a message?
3. DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE who brags about his/her involvement in "James Bond"–type activities?
4. DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE who has been going to a foreign embassy or consulate, or who is involved in business with a foreign government?
5. DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE who has come into the office in the morning and returned a document to the safe?
6. DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE who always has a lot of unexplained money?

Second, report your suspicions to someone whose job it is to investigate suspected cases of espionage . . . someone who knows.

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[Prayers]

GOD'S POLICY

From the October, November, and December issues of Intercessors for America, *a Reston, Virginia, newsletter "challenging Christians to unite in prayer and fasting for America." Each month the newsletter suggests several topical "focuses" for subscribers' prayers.*

NASA

Intercede that the Lord remove all corrupt and incompetent personnel and that he restore correct vision, management, and morale to NASA and to the entire aviation industry. In the name of Jesus Christ, break any curses and bind demonic assaults which satanic networks and covens have conjured to destroy the U.S. space program, airlines, air travel, and domestic tranquillity. Pray for the encouragement and protection of all appointed space and aviation workers.

THE SUMMIT

Intercede that God go before, appoint an angelic guardian, move against deceptions and media

[Chart]

SPORTS' GNP

From the November 16, 1987 issue of Sports inc.: The Sports Business Weekly. *The magazine and Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates calculated the value of goods and services produced by the sports industry in the United States in 1986. Sports ranked twenty-fifth among all U.S. industries in 1986 in the value of its GNP.*

Category	*(in millions)*
Participant/Leisure Sports	
Golf Green Fees and Memberships	$3,900
Golf Lessons/Cart and Equipment Rentals	1,800
Health/Fitness/Racquet Club Memberships	4,900
Bowling	4,000
Ski-lift Tickets	1,130
Ski Lessons/Ski Rentals/ Accommodations	500
Sporting Goods	15,100
Advertising	
Newspapers	2,700
Magazines	512
Stadium Signs	400
Spectator Sports (ticket receipts)	3,100
Legal Gambling (net take)	
Horse and Greyhound Pari-mutuel	2,600
Nevada: Sports and Horse-racing Books	81
Concessions, Souvenirs, and Novelties	1,920
Television Rights	1,080
Corporate Sponsorships	800
Athlete Endorsement Fees	500
License Fees for Retail Sports Properties	488
Sports Magazine Purchases	412
Golf-course Construction	400
Sports Book Purchases	270
Stadium Construction	236
Trading Cards	200
Sports Insurance	155
Olympic Budgets	23
U.S. Olympic Team	44
Halls of Fame	2
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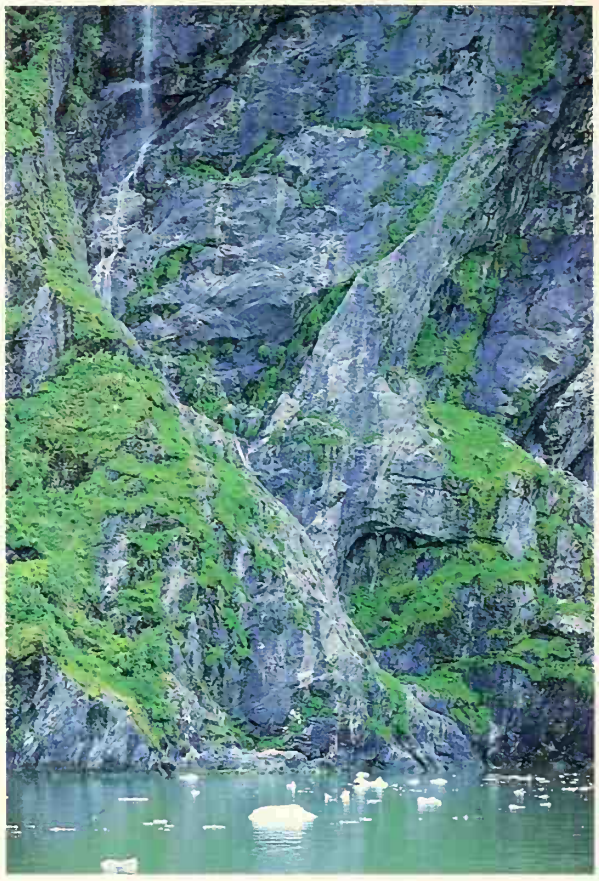

© 1987, ROBERT GLENN KETCHUM

By Robert Glenn Ketchum. From The Tongass: Alaska's Vanishing Rain Forest, *published by Aperture. The Tongass, a coastal national forest in southeast Alaska, is threatened by lumbering. At left, an aerial view of pools on the surface of a glacier; at right, fjord walls and ice floes. Ketchum co-wrote the book with his wife, Carey.*

distortions, and exhibit his sovereignty during the December 7–10 meeting. Bind the spirits of Antichrist and intercede that God show mercy and keep America from any agreements contrary to his will.

PRESIDENT REAGAN

Undergird President and Mrs. Reagan. Withstand confusion and rebuke all that would undermine or thwart the completion of the administration's God-appointed mandate. Intercede for Chief of Staff Howard Baker, the Cabinet, and advisers. Pray that the staff be protected and shielded from spiritual warfare and occult influences.

THE ELECTION

God's moral spotlight continues to be, not only on the Church, but on the turbulent political arena as well. "Righteousness exalts a nation" (John 16:8), and candidates for high office cannot ignore the morality of their private conduct. Continue to give thanks as God's standard of justice is raised up, and earnestly pray for mercy and for his choice for our next president.

[Essay]

EVENTS IN THE SKIES

By Doris Lessing. In Granta, *No. 22. Lessing's new novel,* The Fifth Child, *will be published this month by Knopf.*

I once knew a man, a black man, who told me he had been brought up in a village so far from the nearest town he had to walk a day to reach it. Later he knew this "town" was itself a village, having in it a post office, a shop, and a butcher. He had still to experience the white men's towns, which he had heard about. This was in the southern part of Africa. The villagers were subsistence farmers, and grew maize, millet, pumpkins, chickens. They lived as people have done for thousands of years except for one thing. Every few days a little glittering airplane appeared in the sky among the clouds and the circling hawks. He did not know what it was,

where it came from, or where it went. Remote, unreachable, a marvel, it appeared over the forest where the sun rose, and disappeared where it went down. He watched for it. He thought about it. His dreams filled with shining and fragile emanences that could sit on a branch and sing or that ran from his father and the other hunting men like a duiker or a hare, but that always escaped their spears. He told me that when he remembered his childhood that airplane was in the sky. It connected not with what he was now, a sober modern man living in a large town, but with the tales and songs of his people, for it was not real, not something to be brought down to earth and touched.

When he was about nine his family went to live with relatives near a village that was larger than either the handful of huts in the bush or the "town" where they had sometimes bought a little sugar or tea or a piece of cloth. There the black people worked in a small gold mine. He learned that twice a week an airplane landed in the bush on a strip of cleared land, unloaded parcels, mail, and sometimes a person, and then flew off. He was by now going to a mission school. He walked there with his elder brother and his younger sister every morning, leaving at six to get there at eight, then walked back in the afternoon. Later, when he measured distances not by the time it took to cover them, but by the miles, yards, and feet he learned in school, he knew he walked eight miles to school and eight back.

This school was his gateway to the life of riches and plenty enjoyed by white people. This is how he saw it. Motorcars, bicycles, the goods in the shops, clothes—all these things would be his if he did well in school. School had to come first, but on Saturdays and Sundays and holidays he went stealthily to the edge of the airstrip, sometimes with his brother and sister, and crouched there waiting for the little plane. The first time he saw a man jump down out of its high uptilted front his heart stopped, then it thundered, and he raced shouting exuberantly into the bush. He had not before understood that this apparition of the skies, like a moth but made out of some substance unknown to him, had a person in it: a young white man, like the storemen or the foremen in the mines. In the village of his early childhood he had played with grasshoppers, pretending they were airplanes. Now he made little planes out of the silver paper that came in the packets of cigarettes that were too expensive for his people to smoke.

With these infant models in his hands the airplane seemed close to him, and he crept out of the bush to reach out and touch it, but the pilot saw him, shouted at him—and so he ran away. In his mind was a region of confusion, doubt and delight mixed, and this was the distance between himself and the plane. He never said to himself, "I could become a pilot when I grow up." On the practical level what he dreamed of was a bicycle, but they cost so much—five pounds—that his father, who had one, would need a year to get it paid off. (His father had become a storeman in a mine shop, and that job, and the move to this new place, was to enable his children to go to school and enter the new world.) No, what that airplane meant was wonder, a dazzlement of possibilities, but they were all unclear. When he saw that airplane on the landing strip or, later, that one or another in the skies, it made him dream of how he would get on his bicycle when he had one, and race along the paths of the bush so fast that . . .

When he had finished four years at school he could have left. He already had more schooling than most of the children of his country at that time. He could read a little, write a little, and do sums rather well. With these skills he could get a job as a boss boy or perhaps working in a shop. But this is not what his father wanted. Because these children were clever, they had been invited to attend another mission school, and the fees meant the father had to work not only at the store job in the daytime, but at night as a watchman. And they, the children, did odd jobs on weekends and through holidays, running errands, selling fruit at the back doors of white houses with their mother. They all worked and worked; and, again, walking to and from the new school took the children four hours of every day. (I once knew a man from Czechoslovakia who said he walked six miles to school and six miles back in snow or heat or rain, because he was a poor boy, one of eleven children, and this is what he had to do to get an education. He became a doctor.)

This man, the African, at last finished school. He had understood the nature of the cloudy region in his mind where the airplane still lived. He had seen much larger planes. He knew now the shining creature of his childhood was nothing compared to the monsters that went to the big airports in the cities. A war had come and gone, and he had read in the newspapers of great battles in Europe and the East, and he understood what airplanes could be used for. The war had not made much difference to him and his family. Then his country, which until that point had been loosely ruled by Britain in a way that affected him personally very little (and he knew this was unlike some of the countries further south), became independent and had a black government. By now the family lived in the capital of the country. They had a two-room

house in a township. This move, too, this bettering, was for the children. Now the brother took a job in a store as a clerk, and the sister was a nurse in the hospital, but he decided to go on learning. At last he became an accountant and understood the modern world and what had separated that poor black child he had been from the airplane. These days he might smile at his early imaginings, but he loved them. He still loved the little airplane. He said to himself: "It was never possible for me to fly an airplane, it never occurred to me, because black men did not become pilots. But my son . . . "

His son, brought up in a town where airplanes came and went every day, said, "Who wants to be a pilot? What a life!" He decided to be a lawyer, and that is what he is.

My friend, who told me all this, said, "My son would never understand, never in his life, what that little plane meant to me and the kids in the bush."

But I understood. On the farm where I grew up, once a week I watched a small airplane appear, coming from the direction of the city. It descended over the ridge into the bush on to the airstrip of the Mandora Mine, a Lonrho mine. I was transported with delight and longing. In those days, ordinary people did not fly. A lucky child might get taken up for a "flip" around the sky, price five pounds. It was a lot of money, and I did not fly for years.

Last year I met a little Afghan girl, a refugee with her family in Pakistan. She had lived in a village that had water running through it from the mountains, and it had orchards and fields, and all her family and her relatives were there. Sometimes a plane crossed the sky from one of the larger cities of Afghanistan to another. She would run to the edge of the village to get nearer to that shining thing in the sky, and stand with her hands cradling her head as she stared up . . . up . . . up . . . Or she called to her mother, "An airplane, look!"

And then the Russians invaded, and one day the visiting airplane was a gunship. It thundered over her village, dropped its bombs, and flew off. The house she had lived in all her days was rubble, and her mother and her little brother were dead. So were several of her relatives. And as she walked across the mountains with her father, her uncle, her aunt, and her three surviving cousins, they were bombed by the helicopters and the planes, so that more people died. Now, living in exile in the refugee camp, when she thinks of the skies of her country she knows they are full of aircraft, day and night, and the little plane that flew over her village with the sunlight shining on its wings seems like something she once imagined, a childish dream.

[Essay]

BEING THERE, WRITING HERE

Excerpted from Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author, *by Clifford Geertz, published by Stanford University Press. Geertz is Harold F. Linder Professor of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. This essay originally appeared in* ZZYVA, *a quarterly published in San Francisco.*

> Right away this afternoon I go with Abba Jérome to see [the Ethiopian woman] Emawayish and give her pens, ink, and a notebook so she can record for herself—or dictate to her son—the manuscript [of her songs], letting it be understood that the head of the expedition, if he is pleased, will present her with the desired gift.
>
> Emawayish's words this afternoon when I told her, speaking of her manuscript, that it would be especially good for her to write down some love songs like those of the other night: *Does poetry exist in France?* And then: *Does love exist in France?*
>
> —Michel Leiris
> "Phantom Africa (Emawayish),"
> in *Sulfur*, No. 15

However far from the groves of academe anthropologists seek out their subjects—a shelved beach in Polynesia, a charred plateau in Amazonia—they write their accounts with the world of lecterns, libraries, blackboards, and seminars all about them. In itself, Being There is a postcard experience ("I've been to Kathmandu—have you?"). It is Being Here, a scholar among scholars, that gets your anthropology read . . . published, reviewed, cited, taught.

Although the fact that almost all ethnographers are university types of one sort or another is so familiar as to confound the thought that matters might be otherwise, the incongruities implicit in such a divided existence—a few years, now and again, scuffling about with cattle herders or yam gardeners, a lifetime lecturing to classes and arguing with colleagues—have recently begun to be more sharply felt. What once seemed only technically difficult, getting "their" lives into "our" works, has turned morally, politically, even epistemologically, delicate. The *suffisance* of Lévi-Strauss, the assuredness of Evans-Pritchard, the brashness of Malinowski, and the imperturbability of Benedict now seem very far away.

What is at hand is a pervasive nervousness

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about the whole business of claiming to explain enigmatical others on the grounds that you have gone about with them in their native habitat or combed the writings of those who have. The Emawayish question now is everywhere: What happens to reality when it is shipped abroad?

Both the world that anthropologists for the most part study, which once was called primitive, tribal, traditional, or folk, and now is called emergent, modernizing, peripheral, or submerged, and the one that they for the most part study it from—academia—have vastly changed. The end of colonialism altered radically the nature of the social relationship between those who ask and look and those who are asked and looked at. The decline of faith in brute fact, set procedures, and unsituated knowledge in the human sciences, and indeed in scholarship generally, altered no less radically the askers' and lookers' conception of what it was they were trying to do. Imperialism in its classical form—metropoles and possessions—and scientism in its—impulsions and billiard balls—fell at more or less the same time. Things have been less simple since, on both the Being There and the Being Here sides of the anthropological equation, an equation First World trinkets and Third World songs now mock more than balance.

The transformation, partly juridical, partly ideological, partly real, of the people anthropologists mostly write about, from colonial subjects to sovereign citizens, has altered entirely the moral context within which the ethnographical act takes place. Even those exemplary elsewheres—Lévi-Strauss's Amazon or Benedict's Japan—that were not colonies, but stranded hinterlands or closed-off emperies "in the middle of the sea," stand in a quite different light since partition, Lumumba, Suez, and Vietnam changed the political grammar of the world. The more recent scattering of formerly encapsulated peoples across the globe—Algerians in France, Koreans in Kuwait, Pakistanis in London, Cubans in Miami—has only extended the process by reducing the spacing of variant turns of mind, as has, of course, jetplane tourism as well. One of the major assumptions upon which anthropological writing rested until only yesterday—that its subjects and its audience were not only separable but morally disconnected; that the first were to be described but not addressed, the second informed but not implicated—has fairly well dissolved. The world has its compartments still, but the passages between them are much more numerous and much less well secured.

This inter-confusion of object and audience—as though Gibbon were to find himself suddenly with a Roman readership—leaves contemporary anthropologists in some uncertainty as to rhetorical aim. Who is now to be persuaded? Africanists or Africans? Americanists or American Indians? Japanologists or Japanese? And of what: Factual accuracy? Theoretical sweep? Imaginative grasp? Moral depth? It is easy enough to answer "all of the above." It is not quite so easy to produce a text that thus responds.

Indeed, the very right to write—to write ethnography—seems at risk. The entrance of once colonialized or castaway peoples (wearing their own masks, speaking their own lines) onto the stage of global economy, international high politics, and world culture has made the claim of the anthropologist to be a tribune for the un-

[Poem]

THE TREE

By August Kleinzahler. From Sulfur, *No. 20. Kleinzahler's chapbook,* On Johnny's Time, *will be published this spring by Pig Press in Durham, England.* Sulfur *is published three times a year at Eastern Michigan University, in Ypsilanti.*

Pinch a branch to see if it's quick
or else the thing'll just stand
for who knows how long
sun, wind, frost, chafing it, dogs
pissing at the base
birds nesting up high where leaves had been

while the years blur
and the town next door's evacuated
so the kids don't turn stupid
from the water that solvents leached into
or testicle cancer
diagnosed in the Mayor on down

Cape Canaveral is renamed Eric Dolphy
your friends all swell, turn
ugly then drop
after their cute little girls grow up to fuck brutes
marry them and breed

that shield of bark
rons roam the grain of
thogens try to corkscrew into
fall apart and dry . . .

t would not bloom
would not die

came

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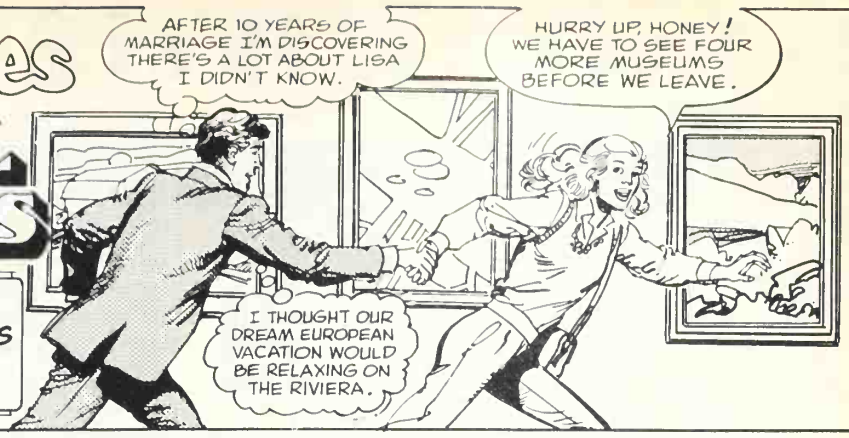
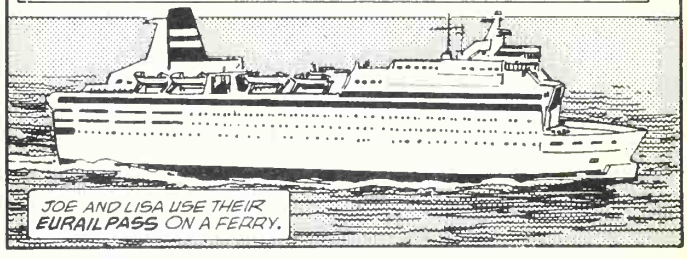

AFTER 10 YEARS OF MARRIAGE I'M DISCOVERING THERE'S A LOT ABOUT LISA I DIDN'T KNOW.
HURRY UP, HONEY! WE HAVE TO SEE FOUR MORE MUSEUMS BEFORE WE LEAVE.
I THOUGHT OUR DREAM EUROPEAN VACATION WOULD BE RELAXING ON THE RIVIERA.

JOE, YOU'RE SO SMART. A *EURAILPASS* WAS A WONDERFUL IDEA. NOW WE DON'T HAVE TO WAIT ON ANY LINES--WE CAN JUST HOP THIS TRAIN.
LOOK AT THE SCENERY. WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT TRAVELING ON LESS THAN $20 A DAY COULD BE SO LUXURIOUS?
SECOND IS DAY EURAILPASS

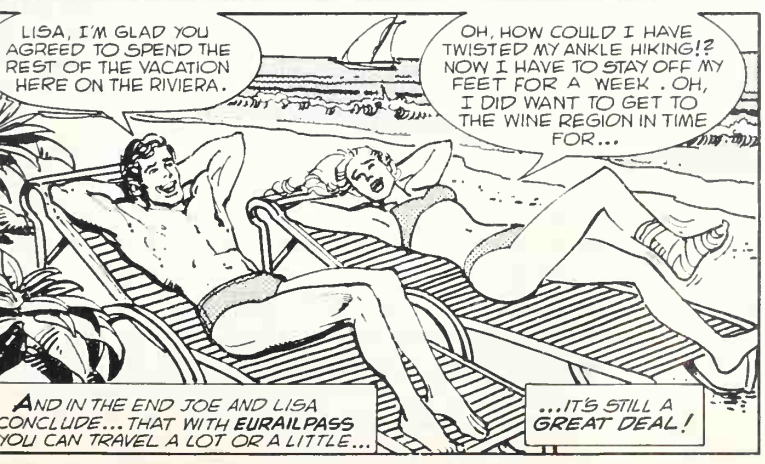
OVER DINNER AT THE CAFÉ OUI, THE COUPLE CHANGES PLANS.

AFTER A DAY HERE WE'LL USE THE *EURAILPASS* TO TAKE THE TRAIN TO THE ALPS. THE HIKING WILL BE...
BUT WHEN WILL WE GO TO THE RIVIERA?
DEAR, THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF A *EURAILPASS*. WE DON'T HAVE TO FOLLOW OUR ORIGINAL ITINERARY.

PLANS CHANGE AGAIN DUE TO A STRANGE TWIST OF FATE.



JOE AND LISA USE THEIR *EURAILPASS* ON A FERRY.


LISA, I'M GLAD YOU AGREED TO SPEND THE REST OF THE VACATION HERE ON THE RIVIERA.
OH, HOW COULD I HAVE TWISTED MY ANKLE HIKING!? NOW I HAVE TO STAY OFF MY FEET FOR A WEEK. OH, I DID WANT TO GET TO THE WINE REGION IN TIME FOR...
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heard, a representer of the unseen, a kenner of the misconstrued, increasingly difficult to sustain. Malinowski's happy "Eureka!" when first coming upon the Trobrianders—"Feeling of ownership: It is I who will describe them . . . [I who will] create them"—sounds in a world of OPEC, ASAN, *Things Fall Apart*, and Tongan running backs with the Cleveland Browns (as well as one of Yoruban, Sinhalese, and Tewa anthropologists), not merely presumptuous, but outright comic.

All of this is made the more dire, leading to distracted cries of plight and crisis, because at the same time that the moral foundations of ethnography have been shaken by decolonization on the Being There side, its epistemological foundations have been shaken by a general loss of faith in received stories about the nature of representation, ethnographic or any other, on the Being Here side. Confronted, in the academy, by a sudden explosion of polemical prefixes (neo-, post-, meta-, anti-) and subversive title forms (*After Virtue, Against Method, Beyond Belief*), anthropologists have had added to their "Is it decent?" worry (Who are *we* to describe *them?*) an "Is it possible?" one (Can Ethiopian love be sung in France?), with which they are even less well prepared to deal. How you know you know is not a question they have been used to asking in other than practical, empiricist terms: What is the evidence? How was it collected? What does it show? How words attach to the world, texts to experience, works to lives, is not one they have been used to asking at all. Increasingly, they have come to recognize that "telling it like it is" is hardly a more adequate slogan for ethnography than for philosophy since Wittgenstein (or Gadamer), history since Collingwood (or Ricoeur), literature since Auerbach (or Barthes), painting since Gombrich (or Goodman), politics since Foucault (or Skinner), or physics since Kuhn (or Hesse). The pervasive questioning of standard modes of text construction—and standard modes of reading—not only leaves easy realism less easy; it leaves it less persuasive. Besides the moral hypochondria that comes with practicing a profession inherited from contemporaries of Kipling and Lyautey, there is the authorial self-doubt that comes from practicing it in an academy beset with paradigms, epistemes, language games, *Vorurteile*, epoches, illocutionary acts, S/s, *problématiques*, intentionalities, aporia, and *écriture*. The inadequacy of words to experience, and their tendency to lead off only into other words, has been something both poets and mathematicians long have known; but it is rather a new discovery so far as ethnographers are concerned, and it has put them, or some of them, into something of a disarray, perhaps permanent, probably not.

There are dangers in regarding the anthropological vocation as a literary one. The enterprise may be seen as turning, like certain varieties of linguistic philosophy, on the meaning of words, its central quarrels all conceptual ones, endlessly dissected, endlessly unresolved—"What (or where) is Culture?" "Can Society be said to cause Behavior?" "Does Kinship exist?" "Do Institutions think?" It may be regarded as so much verbal seduction: rhetorical artifice designed to move intellectual goods in a competitive market. Or perhaps most popularly, now that the world seems populated with class hypocrisy, false consciousness, and secret agendas, it may be taken to be (rank) ideology in the guise of (dispassionate) science—an imposture to be exposed. And there is, as always when style is attended to and genre underlined, the risk of aestheticism, the possibility that both ethnographers and their audience may come to believe that the value of writing about tattooing or witchcraft exhausts itself in the pleasures of the text: anthropology as a good read.

But the risks are worth running, and not only because some central issues do in fact revolve around what language games we choose to play, or because neither product enhancement nor tendentious argument is exactly unknown in the increasingly desperate scramble to be noticed, or because writing to please has something to be said for it, at least as against writing to intimidate. The risks are worth running because running them leads to a thoroughgoing revision of our understanding of what it is to open (a bit) the consciousness of one group of people to (something of) the life-form of another, and in that way to (something of) their own. What it is (a task at which no one ever does more than not utterly fail) is to inscribe a present—to convey in words "what it is like" to be somewhere specific in the lifeline of the world—*Here*, as Pascal famously said, rather than *There; Now* rather than *Then*. Whatever else ethnography may be—Malinowskian experience-seeking, Lévi-Straussian rage for order, Benedictine cultural irony, or Evans-Pritchardish cultural reassurance—it is above all a rendering of the actual, a vitality phrased.

This capacity to persuade readers (most of them academic, virtually all of them at least part-time participants in that particular form of existence evasively called "modern") that what they are reading is an authentic account by someone personally acquainted with how life proceeds in some place, at some time, among some group, is the basis upon which anything else ethnography seeks to do—analyze, explain, amuse, disconcert, celebrate, edify, excuse, as-

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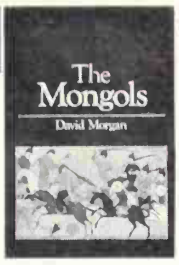

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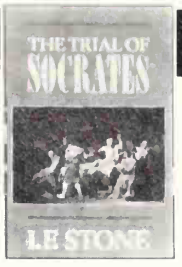

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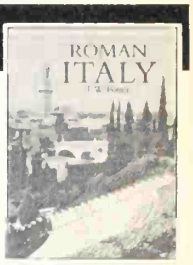

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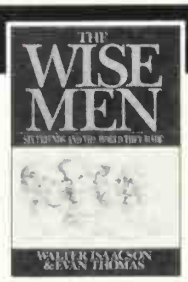

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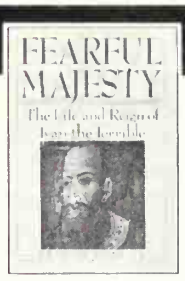

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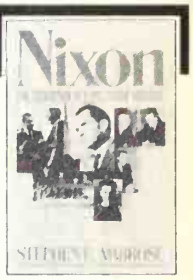

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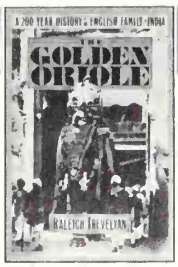

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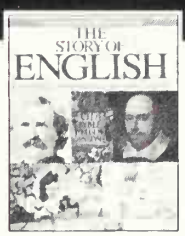

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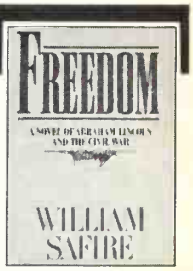

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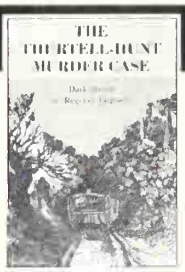

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tonish, subvert—finally rests. The textual connection of the Being Here and Being There sides of anthropology, the imaginative construction of a common ground between the Written At and the Written About is the *fons et origo* of whatever power anthropology has to convince anyone of anything—not theory, not method, not even the aura of the professorial chair, consequential as these last may be.

The moral asymmetries across which ethnography works and the discursive complexity within which it works make any attempt to portray it as anything more than the representation of one sort of life in the categories of another impossible to defend. That may be enough. I, myself, think that it is. But it spells the end of certain pretensions.

Like any cultural institution, anthropology—which is a rather minor one compared with law, physics, music, or cost accounting—is of a place and in a time, perpetually perishing, not so certainly perpetually renewing. And so the question arises: What, now that the proconsuls are gone and socio-mechanics implausible, is the next necessary thing?

There is, of course, no single answer to this question, nor can answers be given before the fact, before anthropological authors actually author them. But, for all that, it seems likely that whatever use ethnographic texts will have in the future, if in fact they actually have any, it will involve enabling conversation across societal lines—of ethnicity, religion, class, gender, language, race—that have grown progressively more nuanced, more immediate, and more irregular. The next necessary thing (so at least it seems to me) is neither the construction of a universal Esperanto-like culture, the culture of airports and motels, nor the invention of some vast technology of human management. It is to enlarge the possibility of intelligible discourse between people quite different from one another in interest, outlook, wealth, and power, and yet contained in a world where, tumbled as they are into endless connection, it is increasingly difficult to get out of each other's way.

[List]

THE SPURIOUS TROMBONE

From a list compiled at the New Music America convention in Philadelphia last October. Convention-goers were asked to name the instruments they play or compose for. The survey was conducted by Stidfole & Pratt Associates, a New York City agency that represents musicians and artists.

aeolian harp
armadillo shells
binaural microphones
Celtic harp
clay
digeridoo
electronic birdcall
enormously amplified brainwaves
frame drum
gamelan
glass harmonica
Indian bamboo flute
jars
marimba
mbira
microtonal accordion
modified vibraphone
musical saw
nailboards
paper
pine cones
slow-sweep, pure-wave oscillators
spurious trombone
stroke rods
triple ocarina
tuning forks
violin
whistles

[Fiction]

ARABESQUE

From Arabesques, *a novel by Anton Shammas, to be published next month by Harper & Row. Shammas, thirty-eight, is an Israeli Arab who lives in Jerusalem and writes in Hebrew. His essay "Arab Walls, Reflecting Change" appeared in the November 1987 issue of* Harper's Magazine. *Translated by Vivian Eden.*

Imagine, then, a British soldier plummeting from the roof down into our courtyard, landing in a puddle of water from the early December rain. The water splashes on the gas mask over the face of a boy playing by the puddle and blurs his vision. But first imagine a shot, just a single round, from among the hundreds that had begun with the gray dawn, bullets whose trajectories crisscrossed the skies of Haifa, in the warp and woof of the war between Jews and Arabs. Then imagine this one bullet hitting the soldier standing watch on the roof. He falls, and be-

hind him the sharp spire of St. John's Church rises toward the brightening sky. The boy, who is about seven, freezes to the spot where the thud has caught him trying to frighten a neighbor's daughter with the gas mask he has bought from a peddler of military equipment. Now imagine the long second that passes between the thud and the scream: the silence which falls on the courtyard and is cast over the body, and then is lifted by the scream which hangs in the air until the silence wraps itself again around the still body.

After the fashion of a villager who no longer takes any notice of the gunpowder lurking in the air, Father had come to Haifa from Fassuta a few months before, in the summer of 1947. It was just when the end of the British Mandate began to appear on the horizon, and with it the possibility of prosperity, because Fassuta was already becoming a depot for smuggling from either side of the Lebanese border. To Father's credit, he was never tempted to participate in the smuggling operations run by my Uncle Yusef—who was moving tobacco, *araq,* and other even more elevating goods from the north to the south—even though these operations were handsomely remunerated. He was not by nature a sharp man of business. He was an artist at walking the tightrope between wealth and poverty, between safety and danger, and if in times of crisis he might skirt the edge of catastrophe, he somehow managed to lead the family to a safe haven.

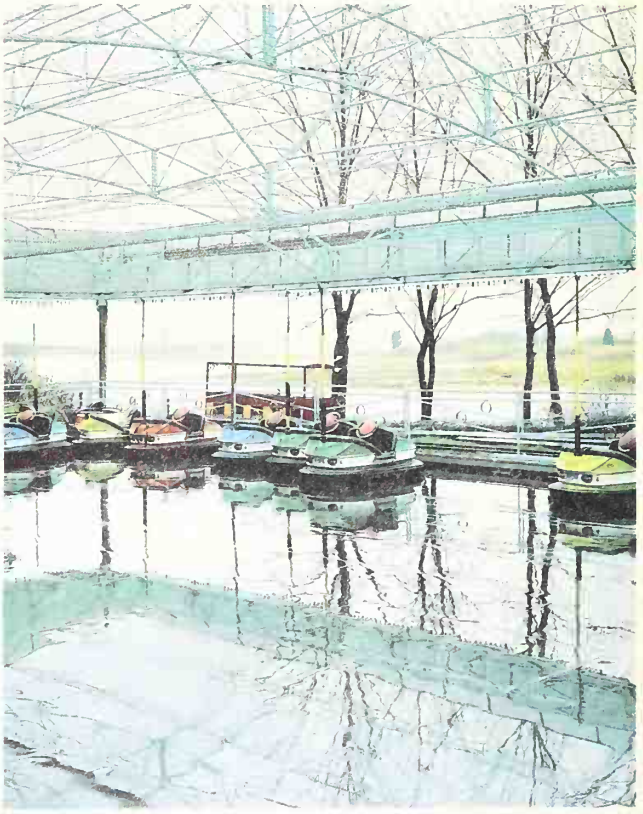
I think about the two of them: the one brother a man of the soil who knew by heart both volumes of the Chronicles of the Hilal Tribe, the volume of the homeland and the volume of the wanderings, and who in his soul yearned to be a folk poet; the other brother a craftsman so exacting that every pair of shoes he made continued to walk even after their owner died, as my Uncle Yusef used to say, and who never acted without forethought and calculation (though in his large endeavors he always came out middling, neither at the top nor at the bottom), and whose life's work lay at the two poles of the body, the head and the feet. But when I think about the two of them now, I realize that the real man of the earth was my father, and that my uncle was a prisoner of the enchantments of the air, fire, and water of the world.

Be all of that as it may, in the summer of 1947, my father took all his savings, 100 Palestinian pounds, and invested most of them in a year's lease of a house on St. John Street in Haifa, in the very heart of the neighborhood which in only a few weeks would become one of the strategic areas in the fight for the city. The village cobbler's dream was to own a shoemaking shop in Haifa. But his dream proved to be like the honored guest at a village wedding, who makes his entrance just when the hosts are pressing their guests to take second and third helpings of all the delicacies that the women of the house and the neighboring women and the related wives and daughters and daughters-in-law have prepared late into the previous night. And now when the honored guest takes his place at the head of one of the tables in the full knowledge of his own importance, and as he waits for a skewer of the succulent liver of the fatted calf that had been slaughtered or a lavish portion of the kid seethed in its mother's milk, he finds that the cooking pots have already been emptied and their bottoms scraped for the last morsels and the cooking fires have died out.

Uncle Yusef tried to persuade my father that the future is in the hands of an *afreet,* a quick and mischievous *jinni,* and that there is no telling what will happen when the country is seething and quaking. Yet the sharp-eyed can see the sparks spraying out of the air vent of the *mashhara,* the apparatus for making charcoal, and knows that fire has seized hold of the insulated

[Photograph]

OCEAN BEACH



"Ocean Beach, Connecticut," by Alfred Seiland. From an exhibition of Seiland's work at the Art Institute of Chicago this winter. East Coast–West Coast, *a book of Seiland's photographs, was recently published by Edition Stemmle, in Switzerland.*

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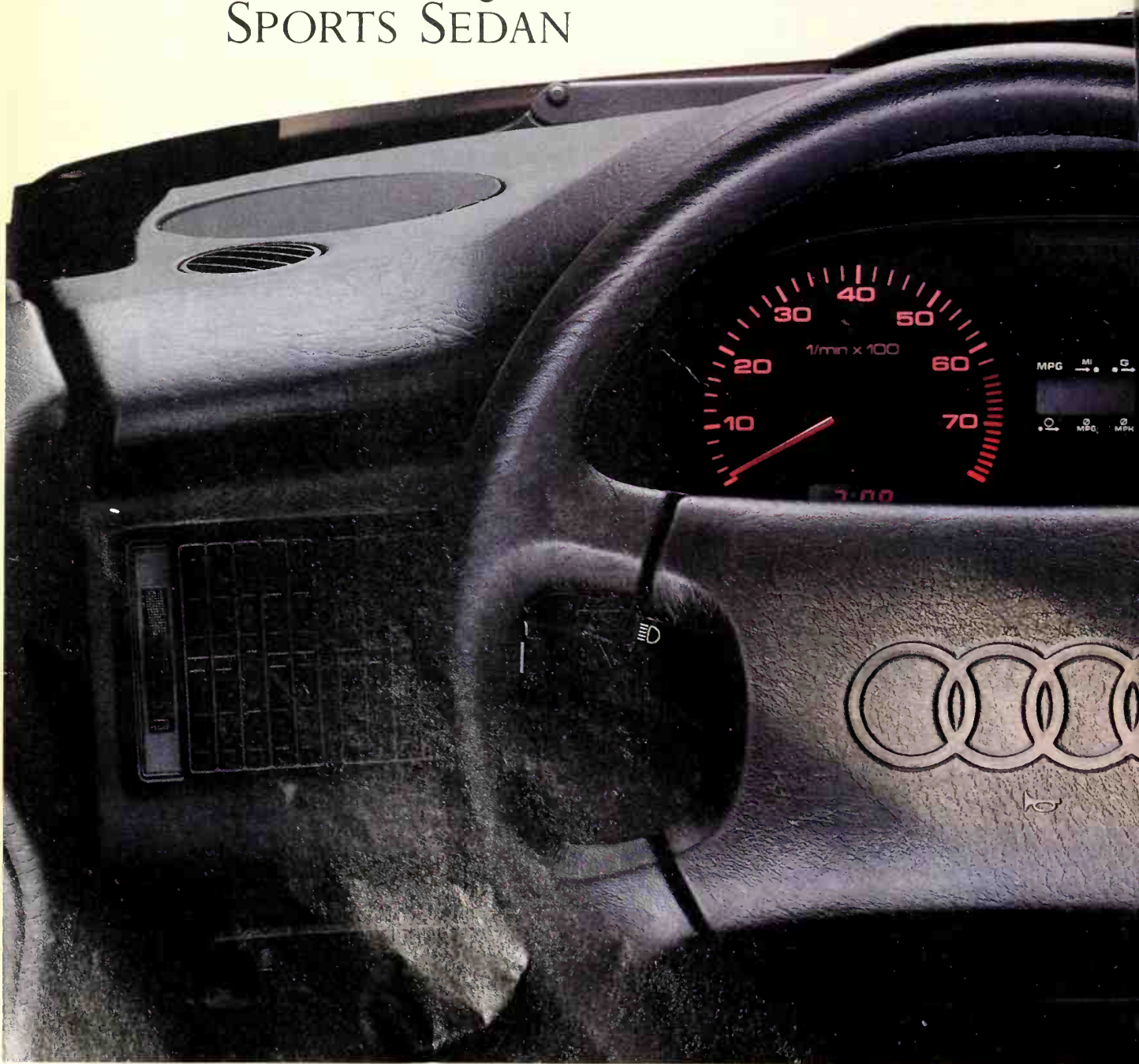

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"St. George's, Granada, West Indies," by Mitch Epstein. From Caribbean, *a recent show of Epstein's photographs at the Lieberman & Saul Gallery in New York City.*

wood within, and that this batch will yield nothing but ashes. My Uncle Yusef's images were like that, and my father, who did not like the meandering arabesques, replied with the proverb: "Every man has his own Laylah." Whereupon Uncle Yusef drew himself up to his full height and said, "You go first to see what the situation is and then bring your family." My mother's nod of agreement left my father only one course of action.

But my uncle couldn't tell that my father would bet his shirt and lose it on the state of Israel. For when the fall of 1947 came it was with storms of bullets. By then he had already bought and set up his shoemaking machines in the cellar of the house, acquired a pile of lasts, and even found a stitcher. The first clients came to inspect the quality of his work and to ask about prices, and inquisitive neighbors expressed amazement at the daring of the enterprise at such a time. All of which made my father all the more sure of his venture. But then the sparks my uncle had already noticed began to burn holes in the fabric of the dream. And on that one gray December day everything collapsed and fell apart with a great thud, and my father stood there by the body with his hammer still in his hand and thought that this was not how he had imagined his dream might come crashing down.

The soldier was lying on his back with his eyes open. One arm was flung over his head and the other protected his chest in a sort of belated embrace. From the corner of his mouth blood seeped and dyed the muddy water with the crimson of ancient palaces and glowing hearths and velvet armchairs. My brother Jubran, the boy in the mask, drew close to Father and did not take off the mask, as if it were the last line of defense between himself and the dead soldier, and the neighbor's daughter ran for her life to her mother, because she didn't know what else these villagers had up their sleeves for her. Father looked at the hammer in his hand. Someone could come into the courtyard, take in the scene, and ask the wrong questions. So he hurried to put away the hammer before he called the police.

That was at the beginning of December. And like the dreamer who is shaken awake and tries to close his eyes again to return to the chambers of illusion, my father closed his eyes and soothed my mother, saying this was but a transient episode, and the skies would clear soon, and the battle would be decided for one side or the other, though of the other side he knew nothing. The next morning he began to prepare a hiding place in the house, just in case. It was a dark little room, a forgotten pantry, whose doorless entrance was easy to conceal behind the kitchen cupboard, and like everything else

in the world, it waited for its hour of glory, which was soon to come.

In January the feeling took hold that what could not be settled by shooting could be settled by car bombs; what would not be settled by "concerts," as the shooting was called in the suburbs, could be settled by the solo performance of shock waves in the air. Those were the days my father regretted he was a cobbler and not a glazier, though in his heart he already knew that he had to pick up whatever pieces he could and go back to the village.

One evening in January Uncle Yusef and Khaleel, Uncle Mikha'eel's son, came to stay with us after having transported one of their cargoes to Nazareth. They were still sitting around the sparse supper table when all the windows flew open with a whoosh and the walls trembled.

"I am your eldest brother," said Uncle Yusef to my father, "and tomorrow I'm taking your family back to the village and you can pursue your crazy dreams all by yourself." Father looked at him and said nothing.

In the morning they all set out, except Father, on the long and devious journey to the railroad station at Faisal's Column in the lower city. Whatever they could carry they took along with them. On the way they stayed close to the walls and went by way of every little side alley they encountered. In her heart my mother offered up a prayer of thanks to the Virgin for granting her the wisdom to oppose my father's wish to bring to the new house the mirrored wardrobe and the wooden bed and all the rest of the furnishings from the *jhaz,* which had been brought on the backs of two camels from Rmeish to our village eight years before. She thought of the long journey she might have to make back to Lebanon, and about the embarrassing moment at the end of it when her brother Elias would stand at the entrance to his home in Beirut and accept her and her children and her husband, and what remained of their worldly goods. What would he think of his sister who had been sent as a bride to a Galilean village with wide-brimmed and colorful *chapeaux* in her suitcases and now has come back as a refugee, bare of head and despondent of soul? Thinking of their small private tragedy she wondered if she had turned off the fire under the pot before they left, and if my father would remember to put out the kerosene stove.

It had begun to rain again when Jubran noticed the man in the gas mask who stood at the end of the alley. He stood with his legs apart, like someone who knew exactly what he was doing, his hands in the pockets of his British jodhpurs, indifferent to the rain falling on his head and on the gas mask covering his face.

"It's the English soldier who fell into our courtyard," said Jubran. Uncle Yusef told him to keep quiet. And they, too, stood there in the rain. Behind them stretched Allenby Street crisscrossed now with bullets and the sounds of explosions and before them stood the man in his gas mask.

"Since we're getting soaked," said Mother, "let's get going."

They went forward a few steps. The man stood still. The end of the alley behind them was filled with smoke.

"He has a gun in his pocket," said Khaleel and suggested to my uncle that he give the man the money they had gotten in Nazareth instead of bringing it to the connection in Rmeish. My uncle pulled the packet of money out of his pocket and held it out in front of the eyes which he had to assume were behind the gas mask. Still the man wouldn't budge. It became clear that he wanted everything they had. My uncle stuffed the bank notes into the pockets of the mysterious man, and then he set down beside him the suitcase and the bundles of clothes.

"*Khawaja,* we are not from here," said Khaleel to him in Arabic. "We are simple villagers and this is not our war."

Later, in the crowded train which was taking them to Akka, Khaleel burst into relieved laughter. The people in the crowded compartment had broken the spell of the nightmare. My uncle boiled with rage at him and at all the nations of the earth and particularly at the fact that in a moment of weakness he had taken Khaleel's advice, he whom the whole village came to for advice.

"Well," said my mother, "let's hope that Hanna hasn't scorched the pot." My uncle shook his head and said, "When the camel's gone, don't cry over the reins." And after that they didn't say a word the whole way back to the village.

But the pot, as it happened, did get scorched.

The next day my father went to his Armenian stitcher to ask his advice. The latter offered him 200 uppers in return for his machines. Light portable leather, in exchange for heavy iron. "I don't belong to your war," said the stitcher, "so I don't need to wander all over the place and be light of foot. But you have to be ready and alert all the time, prepared to set out on your way the moment anything bad happens. For if it is your destiny to be a refugee, you must always be prepared to accept it. So put your home in a suitcase, and your trust in your feet, as a cobbler should."

For a man to be able to walk a long way he needs a sturdy sole sewn correctly to the upper of his shoe. Though my father was not to attain

full refuge[illegible]er since then he took care that ev[illegible] of shoes that came out of his work[illegible]d serve its owner for many long ye[illegible]king, in rain and in heat, over stones [illegible] mud, in their going forth and their [illegible]ing hither, for if the decree of wandering [illegible]ed you over the first time, no one will swear to you, upon the head of your daughter, that it will the second time.

For three weeks he turned the exchange over and over in his mind until he came to a decision. Then for two whole months, he shut himself into the house and devoted himself body and soul to the creation of his life's masterpiece. In his mind's eye he saw the Idea of the Shoe, the all-purpose universal shoe, the shoe for attending receptions in the homes of the Khayat and Khoury and Karaman families, and for trudging to the last of the tents in the most godforsaken refugee camp in the world.

During the day he would sleep a troubled sleep, and at night he would sit down to the tools he had brought with him from our village, having cleaned off the spots of dirt and glue which had clung to them over the years. After dipping them in high-grade gasoline, he wiped and polished them until they gleamed in the lantern light in the forgotten pantry. He handled them like ancient ritual objects as he prepared them for the task which he had taken upon himself. Then he sat down at his table and with his thick carpenter's pencil he made plans and specifications for The Shoe—how it would look and of what materials it would be made and what uppers and what soles and what colors and what laces. Then he would erase and go back and redraw every detail from all its angles. When finally he visualized the perfect pair of shoes standing before him on the table, he set to work on the execution of the plan. He selected the best leathers, the best threads, and the best soles he could get his hands on. Apart from hasty trips into the smoky streets to buy a bit of food, he remained in the forgotten pantry. Each evening he would move aside the cupboard that covered its entrance and go into his dusky kingdom, and the cupboard, as if in response to some unheard command of "Close, Sesame!" would seal the door behind him.

One morning he ventured out of his enchanted cave and found that the door of the house had been broken in during the night and several items had disappeared. But he did not grieve over the loss nor permit himself to worry about the rest of his possessions. From that morning on he no longer shut the front door at all and he allowed the winter winds to overturn and rifle through the few things which remained in the apartment.

In the middle of April, as he later realized, the work was finally done. The *jinnis* came and sat around his tab[illegible] and examined the pair of shoes from every angle; their gleaming white beards brushed gently against the leather of the uppers, and the uppers shone in the light of creation. Their ivory fingers caressed the two soles and the soles tapped on the wooden table like the hoofbeats of the hind let loose. And in the same way the *jinnis* had appeared in a burst of light, they also vanished in a burst of light. As his eyes became accustomed to the dimness of the quaking lantern, he saw a flash on the other side of the cupboard, but by the time he had pushed the cupboard aside and stepped out into the kitchen, the light had faded as if it had never been. He collapsed onto the last stool which remained in the apartment and leaned his back against the wall the rest of the night. At dawn he saw a splendid crimson feather in the first light on the windowsill.

He was shaken awake by an uproar in the courtyard. He rushed into the pantry still in the grip of his dream and pulled the cupboard closed behind him. He heard footsteps, and from the depths of his weariness his practiced ears managed to distinguish three different pairs of shoes.

The owners of the shoes spoke Hebrew, a language my father did not understand, and he strained his ear to interpret their tone and cadence. Soon they went on their way, and the house fell back into its silence, into the sounds of distant explosions. Father emerged from his hiding place. And the feather that was on the windowsill in his dream had vanished.

That was on the morning of Friday, April 23, 1948. Haifa had already fallen. My father put the shoes in a burlap sack and set out on his way. In the port, a boat was taking on some of the fleeing Arabs who, in the course of time and their wanderings, would come to be known as Palestinian refugees. When my father heard that the boat was heading for Akka he climbed aboard and squeezed in among them, because from Akka he could get to the village. A man who was standing next to him asked him if the burlap sack was all he was planning to take along on the journey. My father stuck his hand into the sack and pulled out the pair of shoes, as if he were pulling a *jinni* out of a sealed bottle. The man stared at them, enchanted. "I'll give you everything I have in exchange for them," he said, and pulled out a dank wad of bank notes and stuffed them into the pockets of my astonished father. Then he opened his own burlap sack and took the shoes from Father's hands and slipped them inside. A dull thud was heard.

"What did he have in his sack?" Uncle Yusef was to ask him. "Why didn't you look to see whether he had a gas mask?" ■

THE URGE FOR AN END

Contemplating suicide

By Edward Hoagland

A friend of mine, a peaceable soul who has been riding the New York subways for thirty years, finds himself stepping back from the tracks once in a while and closing his eyes as the train rolls in. This, he says, is not only to suppress an urge to throw himself in front of it but because every couple of weeks an impulse rises in him to push a stranger onto the tracks, any stranger, thus ending his own life too. He blames this partly on apartment living—"pigeonholes without being able to fly."

It is profoundly startling not to trust oneself after decades of doing so. I don't dare keep ammunition in my country house for a small rifle I bought secondhand two decades ago. The gun sat in a cupboard in the back room with the original box of .22 bullets under the muzzle all that time, seldom fired except at a few apples hanging in a tree every fall to remind me of my army training near the era of the Korean War, when I'd been considered quite a marksman. When I bought the gun I didn't trust either my professional competence as a writer or my competence as a father as much as I came to do, but certainly believed I could keep myself alive. I bought it for protection, and the idea that someday I might be afraid of shooting myself with the gun would have seemed inconceivable—laughable.

One's fifties can be giddy years, as anybody fifty knows. Chest pains, back pains, cancer scares, menopausal or prostate complications are not the least of it, and the fidelities of a lifetime, both personal and professional, may be called into question. Was it a mistake to have stuck so long with one's marriage, and to have stayed with a lackluster well-paying job? (Or *not* to have stayed and stuck?) People not only lose faith in their talents and their dreams or values; some simply tire of them. Grow tired, too, of the smell of fried-chicken grease, once such a delight, and the cold glutinosity of ice cream, the boredom of beer, the stop-go of travel, the hiccups of laughter, and of two rush hours a day, then the languor of weekends, of athletes as well as accountants, and even the frantic birdsong of spring—red-eyed vireos that have been clocked singing 22,000 times in a day. Life

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There are desperate suicides and crafty suicides, people who do it to cause others trouble and those who do it to save others trouble

is a matter of cultivating the five senses (the sixth too), and an equilibriu with nature and what I think of as its subdivision, human nature, trustin no one completely but almost everyone at least a little; but this is easi said than done.

More than 30,000 Americans took their own lives last year, men mostly with the highest rate being among those older than sixty-five. When asked a friend of mine why three times as many men kill themselves members of her own sex, she replied with sudden anger, "I'm not going t go into the self-indulgence of men." Suicide is an exasperating act as ofte as it is pitiable. "Committing" suicide is in bad odor in our culture eve among those who don't believe that to cash in your chips ahead of time an hand back to God his gifts to you is a blasphemous sin. We the living, i any case, are likely to feel accused by this person who "voted with his feet. It appears to cast a subversive judgment upon the social polity as a whol that what was supposed to work in life—religion, family, friendship, com merce, and industry—did not; and furthermore, it "frightens the horses i the street," as Virginia Woolf once defined wrongful behavior (before sh killed herself).

Many suicides inflict outrageous trauma, burning permanent injurie into the minds of their children, though they may have joked beforehan only of "taking a dive." And sometimes the gesture has a peevish or cowardly aspect, or seems to have been senselessly shortsighted as far as an outside observer can tell. There are desperate suicides and crafty suicides, people who do it to cause others trouble and people who do it to save others trouble, deranged exhibitionists who yell from a building ledge and close-mouthed, secretive souls who swim out into the ocean's anonymity. Suicide may in fact be an attempt to escape death, shortcut the dreadful deteriorating processes, abort one's natural trajectory, elude "the ruffian on the stairs," in A. E. Housman's phrase for a cruelly painful and anarchic death—make it neat and not messy. The deed can be grandiose or self-abnegating, vindictive or drably mousy, rationally plotted or plainly insane. People sidle toward death, intent upon outwitting their own bodies' defenses, or they may dramatize the chance to make one last, unambiguous, irrevocable decision, like a captain scuttling his ship—death before dishonor—leaping toward oblivion through a curtain of pain, like a frog going down the throat of a snake. One man I knew hosted a quietly affectionate evening with several unknowing friends on the night before he swallowed too many pills. Another waved an apologetic good-bye to a bystander on a bridge; rarely considerate, he turned apologetic in the last moment of life. Never physically inclined, he made a great vault toward the ice on the Mississippi.

In the army, we wore dog tags with a notch at one end by which these numbered pieces of metal could be jammed between our teeth, if we lay dead and nameless on a battlefield, for later sorting. As "servicemen" our job would be to kill people who were pointed out to us as enemies, or make "the supreme sacrifice" for a higher good than enjoying the rest of our lives. Life was very much a possession, in other words—not only God's, but the soldier's own to dispose of. Working in an army hospital, I frequently did handle dead bodies, but this never made me feel I would refuse to kill another man whose uniform was pointed out to me as being inimical, or value my life more tremulously and vigilantly. The notion of dying for my country didn't appeal to me as much as dying free-lance for my ideas (in the unlikely event I *could* do that), but I was ready. People were taught during the 1940s and '50s that one should be ready to die for one's beliefs. Heroes were revered because they had deliberately chosen to give up their lives. Life would not be worth living under the tyranny of an invader, and Nathan Hale apparently hadn't paused to consider whether God might have other uses for him besides being hanged. Nor did the pilot Colin Kelly hesitate before crashing his plane into a Japanese battleship, becoming Ameri-

ca's first well-publicized hero in World War II.

I've sometimes wondered why people who know that they are terminally ill, or who are headed for suicide, so very seldom have paused to take a bad guy along with them. It is lawless to consider an act of assassination, yet hardly more lawless, really, than suicide is regarded in some quarters. Government bureaucracies, including our own, in their majesty and as the executors of laws, regularly weigh the pros and cons of murdering foreign antagonists. Of course the answer is that most individuals are fortunately more timid as well as humbler in their judgment than government officialdom; but beyond that, when dying or suicidal, people no longer care enough to devote their final energies to doing good works of any kind—Hitler himself in their gun sights they would have passed up. Some suicides become so crushed and despairing that they can't recognize the consequences of anything they do; and it's not primarily vindictiveness that wreaks such havoc upon their survivors but their derangement from ordinary life.

Courting the idea is different from the real impulse. "When he begged for help, we took him and locked him up," another friend of mine says, speaking of her husband. "Not till then. Wishing to be out of the situation you are in—feeling helpless and unable to cope—is not the same as wishing to be dead. If I actually wished to be dead, even my children's welfare would have no meaning."

You might think the ready option of divorce available lately would have cut suicide rates, offering an escape to battered wives, lovelorn husbands, and other people in despair. But it doesn't work that way. When the number of choices people have is increased, an entire range of possibilities opens up. The suicide rate among teenagers has nearly quadrupled since 1950, although the standard of comfort that their families enjoy has gone up. Black Americans, less affluent than white Americans, have a suicide rate about half that of whites.

Still, if a fiftyish fellow with fine teeth and a foolproof pension plan, a cottage at the beach and the Fourth of July weekend coming up, kills himself, it seems truculent. We would look at him bafflingly if he told us he no longer likes the Sturm und Drang of banging fireworks.

Then stay at your hideaway! we'd argue with him.

"Big mouths eat little mouths. Nature isn't 'timeless.' Whole lives are squeezed into three months or three days."

What about your marriage?

"She's become more mannish than me. I loved women. I don't believe in marriage between men."

Remarry, then!

"I've gone impotent, and besides, when I see somebody young and pretty I guess I feel like dandling her on my knee."

Marriage is friendship. You can find someone your own age.

"I'm tired of it."

But how about your company?—it's positioned itself on the cutting edge of the silicon frontier. That's interesting.

"I know what wins. It's less and less appetizing."

You're not scared of death anymore?

"It interests me less than it did."

What are you so sick of? The rest of us keep going.

"I'm tired of weathermen and sportscasters on the screen. Of being patient and also of impatience. I'm tired of the President, whoever the President happens to be, and sleeping badly, with forty-eight half hours in the day—of breaking two eggs every morning and putting sugar on something. I'm tired of the drone of my voice, but also of us jabbering like parrots at each other—of all our stumpy ways of doing everything."

You're bored with yourself?

"I'm maybe the least interesting person I know."

You might think that the ready option of divorce available lately would have cut suicide rates, but it doesn't work that way

Paintings by John Register, courtesy of Modernism, San Francisco

Suicidal thinking, if serious, can be a kind of death scare, comparable to suffering a heart attack

But to kill *yourself?*

"You know, it's a tradition, too," he remarks quietly, not making so bold as to suggest that the tradition is an honorable one, though his tone of voice might be imagined to imply this. "I guess I've always been a latent maverick."

Except in circumstances which are themselves a matter of life and death, I'm reluctant to agree with the idea that suicide is not the result of mental illness. No matter how reasonably the person appears to have examined his options, it goes against the grain of nature for him to destroy himself. And any illness that threatens his life changes a person. Suicidal thinking, if serious, can be a kind of death scare, comparable to suffering a heart attack or undergoing a cancer operation. One survives such a phase both warier and chastened. When—two years ago—I emerged from a bad dip into suicidal speculation, I felt utterly exhausted and yet quite fearless of ordinary dangers, vastly afraid of myself but much less scared of extraneous eventualities. The fact of death may not be tragic; many people die with a bit of a smile that captures their mouths at the last instant, and some who are revived after a deadly accident are reluctant to be brought to life, resisting resuscitation, and carrying back confusing, bearish, or ecstatic memories. But the same impetuosity that made him throw himself out of a window might have enabled that person to love life all the more if he'd been calibrated somewhat differently at the time of the emergency. Death's edge is so abrupt and near that many who expect a short, momentary dive may be astounded to find that it is bottomless and change their minds and start to scream when they are only halfway down.

Although my fright at my mind's anarchy superseded my fear of death in the conventional guise of heart seizures, airplane crashes, and so on, nightmares are more primitive, and in my dreams I continued to be scared of a death not sought after—dying from driving too fast and losing control of the car, breaking through thin ice while skating and drowning in the cold, or falling off a cliff. When I am tense and sleeping raggedly, my worst nightmare isn't drawn from anxious prep-school memories or the bad spells of my marriages or any of adulthood's vicissitudes. Nothing else from the past half-century has the staying power in my mind of the elevated train rides that my father and I used to take down Third Avenue to the Battery in New York City on Sunday afternoons when I was three or four or five, so I could see the fish at the aquarium. We were probably pretty good companions in those years, but the wooden platforms forty feet up shook terribly as trains from both directions pulled in and out. To me they seemed worse than rickety—ready to topple. And the roar was fearful, and the railings left large gaps for a child to fall through, after the steep climb up the slat-sided, windy, shaking stairway from street level. It's a rare dream, but several times a year I still find myself on such a perch, without his company or anybody else's, on a boyish or a grown-up's mission, when the elevated platform begins to rattle desperately, seesaw, heel over, and finally come apart, disintegrate, while I cling to struts and trusses.

My father, as he lay dying at home of bowel cancer, used to enjoy watching Tarzan reruns on the children's hour of television. Like a strong green vine, they swung him far away from his deathbed to a world of skinny-dipping, friendly animals, and scenic beauty linked to the lost realities of his adolescence in Kansas City. Earlier, when he was still able to walk without much pain, he'd paced the house for several hours at night, contemplating suicide, I expect, along with other anguishing thoughts, regrets, remembrances, and yearnings, while the rest of us slept. But he decided to lie down and die the slower way. I don't know how much of that decision was for his wife and children, how much was because he didn't want to be a "quitter," as he sometimes put it, and how much was due to his believing that life belongs to God (which I'm not even sure he did). He was not a churchgoer after his thirties. He had belonged to J. P. Morgan's church, St. George's, on Stuyvesant Square—Morgan was a hero of his—but when

ings went a little wrong for him at the Wall Street law firm he worked for, nd he changed jobs and moved out to the suburbs, he became a skeptic on ligious matters, and gradually, in the absence of faith of that previous nd, he adhered to a determined allegiance to the social order. Dwight D. senhower instead of J. P. Morgan became the sort of hero he admired, and suicide would have seemed an act of insurrection against the laws and conventions of the society, internationalist-Republican, that he believed in.

I was never particularly afraid that I might plan a suicide, swallowing a nch of pills and keeping them down—only of what I think of as Anna renina's kind of death. This most plausible self-killing in all of literature frightening because it was unwilled, regretted at midpoint, and came as a mplete surprise to Anna herself. After rushing impulsively, in great mis-y, to the Moscow railway station to catch a train, she ended up under-eath another one, dismayed, astonished, and trying to climb out from der the wheels even as they crushed her. Many people who briefly verge suicide undergo a mental somersault for a terrifying interval during hich they're upside down, their perspective topsy-turvy, skidding, churn-g; and this is why I got rid of the bullets for my .22.

Nobody expects to trust his body overmuch after the age of fifty. Incip-nt cataracts or arthritis, outlandish snores, tooth-grinding, ankles that reaten to turn are part of the game. But not to trust one's *mind?* That's a rprise. The single attribute that older people were sure to have (we ought as boys) was a stodgy dependability, a steady temperance and cau-on. Adults might be vain, unimaginative, pompous, and callous, but they d have their affairs tightly in hand. It was not till my thirties that I began know friends who were in their fifties on equal terms, and I remember eing amused, piqued, and bewildered to learn that some of them still felt marginal or rebellious or in a quandary about what to do with themselves r the next dozen years as my contemporaries were likely to. Even that ose to retirement, some of them harbored a deep-seated contempt for the ganizations they had been working for, ready to walk away from almost verybody they had known and the efforts of whole decades with very little ntiment. Nor did twenty years of marriage necessarily mean more than vo or three—they might be just as ready to walk away from that also, and dn't really register it as twenty years at all. Rather, life could be about to gin all over again. "Bummish" was how one man described himself, with raffish smile—"Lucky to have a roof over my head"—though he'd just put a child through Yale. He was quitting his job and claimed with exasperation that his wife still cried for her mother in her sleep, as if they'd never been married.

The great English traveler Richard Burton quoted an Arab proverb at speaks for many middle-aged men of the old-fashioned variety: "Con-eal thy Tenets, thy Treasure and thy Travelling." These are serious mat-rs, in other words. People didn't conceal their tenets in order to betray em, but to fight for them more opportunely. And except for kings and rincelings, concealing whatever treasure one had went without saying. As r travel, a man's travels were also a matter of gravity. Travel was know-dge, ambiguity, dalliances or misalliances, divided loyalty, forbidden inking; and besides, someday he might need to make a run for it and go ground someplace where he had made some secret friends. Friends of ine whose husbands or whose wives have died have been quite startled terward to discover caches of money or traveler's checks concealed round the house, or a bundle of cash in a safe-deposit box.

Burton, like any other desert adage-spinner (and most individuals over fty), would have agreed to an addition so obvious that it wasn't included begin with: "Conceal thy Illnesses." I can remember how urgently my ther worried that word would get out, after a preliminary operation for his

Nobody expects to trust his body much after the age of fifty. But not to trust one's mind?

It would be hard to define chaos better than as a world where children decide that they don't want to live

cancer. He didn't want to be written off, counted out of the running at the corporation he worked for and in other enclaves of competition. Men often compete with one another until the day they die; comradeship consists of rubbing shoulders jocularly with a competitor. As breadwinners, they must be considered fit and sound by friend as well as foe, and so there's lots of truth to the most common answer I heard when asking why three times as many men as women kill themselves: "They keep their troubles to themselves"; "They don't know how to ask for help."

I'm not entirely like that, and I discovered that when I confided something of my perturbation to a woman friend she was likely to keep telephoning me or mailing cheery postcards, whereas a man would usually listen with concern, communicate his sympathy, and maybe intimate that he had pondered the same drastic course of action himself a few years back and would end up respecting my decision either way. Open-mindedness seems an important attribute to a good many men who pride themselves on being objective, hearing all sides of an issue, on knowing that truth and honesty do not always coincide with social dicta, and who may even cherish a subterranean outlaw streak that, like being ready to violently defend one's family, reputation, and country, is by tradition male.

Men, having been so much freer than women in society, used to feel they had less of a stake in the maintenance of certain churchly conventions and enjoyed speaking irreverently about various social truisms, including even the principle that people ought to die on schedule, not cutting in ahead of their assigned place in line. Contemporary women, after their triumphant irreverence during the 1960s and 1970s, cannot be generalized about so easily. They turn as skeptical and saturnine as any man. In fact, women attempt suicide more frequently, but favor pills or other methods, whereas two-thirds of the men who kill themselves use a gun: in 1985, 85 percent of suicides by means of firearms were committed by men. An overdose of medication hasn't the same finality. It may be reversible if the person is discovered quickly, or be subject to benign miscalculation to start with. Even if it works, perhaps it can be fudged by a kindly doctor in the recordkeeping. Like an enigmatic drowning or a single-car accident that baffles the suspicions of the insurance company, a suicide by drugs can be a way to avoid making a loud statement, and merely illustrate the final modesty of a person who didn't wish to ask for too much of the world's attention.

Unconsummated attempts at suicide can strike the rest of us as self-pitying, self-aggrandizing, or as plaintive plea-bargaining—"childish," we say, though actually the helplessness that echoes through a child's suicide is ghastly beyond any stunt of self-mutilation an adult may indulge in. It would be hard to define chaos better than as a world where children decide that they don't want to live.

Love is the solution to all dilemmas, we sometimes hear; and in those moments when the spirit bathes itself in beneficence and manages to transcend the static of personalities rubbing fur off of each other, indeed it is. Without love nothing matters, Paul told the Corinthians, a mystery which, if true, has no ready Darwinian explanation. Love without a significant sexual component and for people who are unrelated to us serves little practical purpose. It doesn't help us feed our families, win struggles, thrive, and prosper. It distracts us from the ordinary business of sizing people up and making a living, and is not even conducive to intellectual observation, because instead of seeing them, we see right through them to the bewildered child and dreaming adolescent who inhabited their bodies earlier, the now tired idealist who fell in and out of love, got hired and quit, bought cars and wore them out, liked black-eyed susans, blueberry muffins, and roosters crowing—liked roosters crowing better than skyscrapers but now likes skyscrapers better than roosters crowing. As swift as thought, we select the details that we need to see in order to be able to love them.

Yet at other times we'll dispense with these same poignancies and choose

ıly their grunginess to look at, their pinched mouths and shifty eyes, their irst for gin at noon and indifference to their kids, their greed for the best dbit on the buffet table, and their penchant for poking their penises up ıe excretory end of other human beings. I tend to gaze quite closely at the ces of priests I meet on the street to see if a lifetime of love has marked ıem noticeably. Real serenity or asceticism I no longer expect, and I take for granted the beefy calm that often goes with Catholic celibacy, but I am watching for the marks of love and often see mere resignation or tenacity.

Many men are romantics, likely to plunge, go for broke, take tion in a spirit of exigency rather than waiting for the problem to resolve self. Then, still as romantics, they may drift into despairing passivity, are at the TV all day long, and binge with a bottle. Women too may turn enetic for a while and then throw up their hands; but though they may ot seem as grandiosely fanciful and romantic at the outset, they are more equently believers—at least they seem to me to believe in God or in huıanity, the future, and so on. We have above us the inviting eternity of he heavens," if we choose to look at it, lying on our backs in the summer ass under starlight, some of which had left its source before mankind beıme man. But because we live in our heads more than in nature nowadays, ven the summer sky is a mine field for people whose memories are mined. Vith the sky no longer humbling, and sunshine only a sort of convenıce, and no godhead located anywhere outside of our own heads, every roblem may seem insolubly interlocked. When the telephone has become npossible to answer at home, sometimes it finally becomes impossible to ride down the gangplank of a cruise ship in Mombasa too, although no elephones will ring for you there.

But if escapist travel is ruled out in certain emergencies, surely you can *ray*? Pray, yes; but to whom? That requires a bit of preparation. Rarely do eople obtain much relief from praying if they haven't stood in line awhile o get a visa. It's an appealing idea that you can just *go*, and in a previous ra perhaps you could have. But it's not so simple now. What do you beeve in? Whom are you praying to? What are you praying for? There's no rèche on the courthouse lawn; you're not supposed to adhere exactly even o what your parents believed. Like psychotherapy, praying takes time, ven if you know which direction to face when you kneel.

Love is powerfully helpful when the roof falls in—loving other people ith a high and hopeful heart and as a kind of prayer. That feat too, howver, requires new and sudden insights or long practice. The beatitude of oving strangers as well as friends—loving them on sight with a leap of mpathy and intuition—is a form of inspiration, edging, of course, in some ases toward madness, as other states of beatitude can do. But there's no uestion that a genuine love for the living will stymie suicidal depressions ot chemical in origin. Love is an elixir, changing the life of the lover. And many of us have experienced this—a temporary lightening of our eery, prickly disapproval of much of the rest of the world, when at a wedıng or a funeral of shared emotion, or when we have fallen in love.

Yet the zest for life of those unusual men and women who make a great ealous success of living is due more often in good part to the crafty pertiıacity with which they manage to overlook the misery of others. You can vatch them watch life beat the stuffing out of the faces of their friends and cquaintances, yet they themselves seem to outwit the dense delays of soial custom, the tedious tick-tock of bureaucratic obfuscation, accepting oss and age and change and disappointment without suffering punctures in their stomach lining. Breathlessness or strange dull pains from heir nether organs don't nonplus them. They fret and doubt in moderaion, and love a lobster roast, squeeze lemon juice on living clams on the alf shell to prove that the clams are alive, laugh as a robin tussles a worm ut of the ground or a kitten flees a dog. Like the problem drinkers, pork

There's no question that a genuine love for the living will stymie suicidal depressions not chemical in origin

In killing himself a person ackowledges his failures during a time span when heaven and earth caught him like a pair of scissors

eaters, and chain smokers who nevertheless finish out their allotted years, succumbing to a stroke at a nice round biblical age when the best vitamin-eating vegetarian has long since died, their faces become veritable walnuts of fine character, with the same smile lines as the rarer individual whose grin has been affectionate all of his life.

We spend our lives getting to know ourselves, yet wonders never cease. During my adolescent years my states of mind, though undulant, seemed seamless; even when I was unhappy, no cracks or fissures made me wonder if I was a danger to myself. My confidence was such that I treaded the slippery lips of waterfalls, fought forest fires, drove ancient cars cross-country night and day, and scratched the necks of menagerie leopards in the course of various adventures which enhanced the joy of being alive. The chemistry of the mind, because unfathomable, is more frightening. In the city, I live on the waterfront and occasionally will notice an agitated-looking figure picking his way along the pilings and stringpieces of the timbered piers nearby, staring at the sliding whorls on the surface of the Hudson as if teetering over an abyss. Our building, across the street, seems imposing from the water and over the years has acted as a magnet for a number of suicides—people who have dreaded the clammy chill, the onerous smothering essential to their first plan. One woman climbed out after jumping in and took the elevator to our roof (my neighbors remember how wringing wet she was), and leapt off, banging window ledges on the way down, and hit with the whap of a sack of potatoes, as others have.

But what is more remarkable than that a tiny minority of souls reach a point where they entrust their bodies to the force of gravity is that so few of the rest of us splurge an hour of a summer day gazing at the trees and sky. How many summers do we *have*?

People with sunny natures do seem to live longer than people who are nervous wrecks; yet mankind didn't evolve out of the animal kingdom by being unduly sunny-minded. Life was fearful and phantasmagoric, supernatural and preternatural, as well as encompassing the kind of clockwork regularity of our well-governed day. It had numerous superstitious elements, such as we are likely to catch a whiff of only when we're peering at a dead body. And it was not just our optimism but our pessimistic premonitions, our dark moments as a species, our irrational, frightful speculations, our strange mutations upon the simple theme of love, and our sleepless, obsessive inventiveness—our dread as well as our faith—that made us human beings. Staking one's life on the more general good came to include risking suicide also. Brilliant, fecund people sometimes kill themselves.

Joy to the world! . . . Let heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing. The famous Christmas carol invokes not only glee but unity: heaven with nature, not always a Christian combination. It's a rapturous hymn, and no one should refuse to surrender to such a pitch of revelation when it comes. But the flip side of rapture can be a riptide of panic, of hysterical gloom. Our faces are not molded as if joy were a preponderant experience. (Nor is a caribou's or a thrush's.) Our faces in repose look stoic or battered, and people of the sunniest temperament sometimes die utterly unstrung, doubting everything they have ever believed in.

Let heaven and nature sing! But *is* there such harmony? Are God and Mother Nature really the same? And will we risk burning our wings if we mount high enough to try to see? I've noticed that woods soil in Italy smells the same as woods soil in New England when you pick up a handful of it and enjoy its aromas—but is God there the same? It can be precarious to wonder. I don't rule out suicide as being unthinkable for people who have tried to live full lives, and don't regard it as negating the work and faith and even ecstasy they may have known before. In killing himself a person acknowledges his failures during a time span when perhaps heaven and earth had caught him like a pair of scissors—but not his life span. Man is different from animals in that he speculates, a high-risk activity. ■

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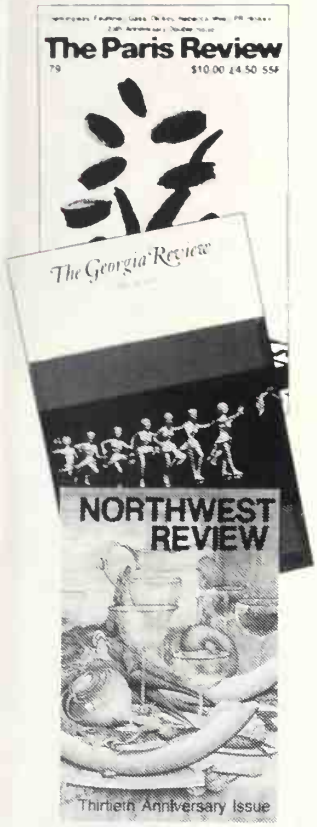

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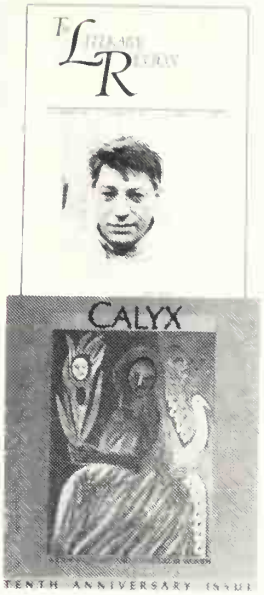

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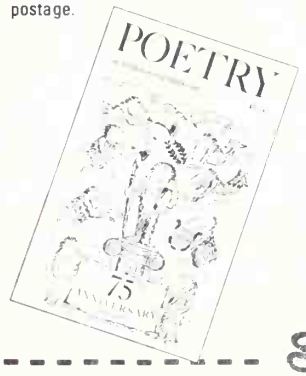

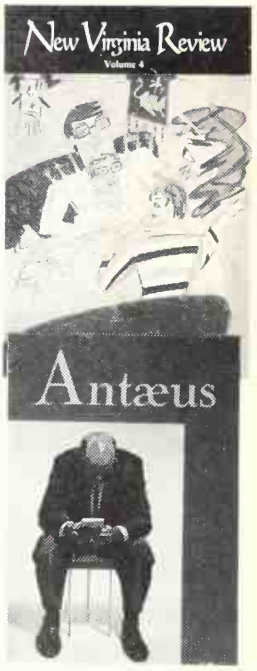

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THE HILLS AND THE CREEKS (ALBANY, 1850)

By William Kennedy

I was bewildered. Nothing in my fourteen-year-old brain seemed to conclude. I was in the midst of a whirlwind panorama of violence and mystery, of tragedy and divine frenzy that mocked every effort at coherence. My family had been swept away by the cholera in the summer of '47, and I had gone to stay with Emmett Daugherty, my father's great friend. I lived out the summer and winter there at Emmett's house beside the canal, and I cried a good deal over my sister and my lost parents. I also stopped going to church. I didn't know what to make of things, but I knew I had to do something for myself and that I had no more time to be a child. And so in the spring of '48, when Emmett heard that a canaler named Masterson needed a helper, I asked for a job and got it. I worked on the canal with him for four of the worst months of my life. He beat me like a mutt and refused to pay me wages. I ran off when I saw how to get away clean, and found work on the skiff of John the Brawn, and together we worked the river out of Albany as ferrymen and haulers, water rats who'd go anywhere with anything between Albany, Troy, West Troy, and Greenbush.

Then, on a late day in December 1849, a day of hellfire and flood, ice and lunacy—the very day that flying sparks ignited the bonnet of Bridie Conroy, sending her on a crazed run and tumble into a shed full of hay, thus igniting what history would call The Great Fire—on this day, I say, I saved a child from drowning when a boat capsized in the Hudson's icy waters. The child was Maud, niece of the great courtesan Magdalena Colon (known as La Ultima, and whose corpse my master, John the Brawn, fished from the river's ice with his hook). Our deeds were described as heroic in the pages of the *Albany Chronicle*, a sheet of considerable power and political brash, founded and edited by Will Canaday, the man who would become my mentor in journalism and language.

But it was Maud who directed us to our haven on the night of high tragedy. The haven I speak of was the grandest mansion in Albany, the home of Hillegond Staats, widow of Petrus Staats, whose family came to the New World from the Netherlands in 1638, and who, before dying the richest man in Albany, had joined the Yankee Lyman Fitzgibbon in establishing an ironworks and foundry, a place of high significance to the story at hand.

The Staats family embraced my life, on that icy night, in the person of the great Hillegond, and thereafter I was enveloped by Staats power, which was very old power, and reeked of money and leisure and exploitation, and looked for its deeper meaning in the eyes of madmen, dead whores, and children of the wild river. "Come in, come in, my frozen dear," the great crone had said to me as I entered into the grand entrance hall, dwarfed by the unknown, which billowed crazily through the mansion like the lovely heat that was already warming my soul. Her words beyond that I cannot precisely recall, for the degree of their welcomeness crowds out their sound and shape from my memory. I was to become a dweller in this grand villa of life, but I

William Kennedy is the author of Ironweed. *His new novel,* Quinn's Book, *will be published in May by Viking.*

was never to forget either my family's tumbledown house of death, or the truth that I had already begun to realize—that violence was the norm of this bellicose world.

One evening in the spring that followed, the knocker sounded and I turned to the foyer to see Capricorn, the black servant, admitting, to my great surprise, a most serious-visaged Emmett Daugherty, and with him a weeping girl of perhaps eight years, a boy somewhat younger than myself who was tilting his head back and blotting his nose with a filthy and bloody rag, and a woman, the children's mother, in a state as wretched as womanhood can inhabit. Hillegond was hosting a musical soiree, but the music trailed off as we stared at these representatives of a gravely negative unknown. Emmett led the woman and children to a sofa in the foyer, then asked to speak with Lyman Fitzgibbon, who had come to the mansion for the soiree. Lyman heard Emmett's request and rose from his seat in the music room. I followed but kept my distance, seeing Matty, another of the black servants, run to the kitchen and return with a wet towel to clean the boy's bloody face, take the old rag from him, and lay him full-length on a bench with his head back.

"It's a tragic thing," Emmett said. "Alfie Palmer, one of the moulders let go in the layoff, he did this to them."

"Why do you bring them here?" Lyman asked.

"It's a foundry matter, Lyman," said Emmett. "And it's your foundry."

"Does Harris know about this?" Lyman asked, Harris being the Yankee engineer who ran the foundry in Lyman's absence.

"I've no use for that man, Lyman. It's his layoffs began this trouble. Your good self is what's needed. None other. Alfie was always a hard-luck man, and with the layoff he had no doctor money when his son got sick, and he could only watch the boy die. It maddened him, as it would any man, and he took to the drink, though I don't know where he got money for that. And there's been fights—dozens—between the new hired men and the old let go, and Alfie in more

Illustrations by John Howard

than his share of those. But he went beyond a punch-up tonight. He followed Toddy Ryan home when Toddy left the foundry, giving him beat, don't you know. But Toddy's only the half-pint, with no health to him at all, and he knew if he fought Alfie he'd be killed sure as sure is, and so he ran to his shack and barred the door, but Alfie broke it in and split Toddy's skull with an ax handle. Then he went after young Joey here, and it looks like he broke the lad's nose. Toddy's wife throws the boilin' tea in Alfie's face, gets the children out, and brings them to the foundry to find me. But her Toddy's dead on the floor and there's no peace for it now, Lyman, no peace. Alfie's on the run and the men are in camps, the old and the new. They'll fight in bunches, and they're forming already. There'll be blood in the streets by morning."

Emmett, his craggy face overgrown with two days' stubble of beard, was a scolding presence. He was foreman at Lyman's North End foundry, the largest stove-making foundry in the city, and had risen in eleven years, despite his lung ailment, from apprentice to moulder to chief grievance spokesman, a voice of righteous reason from below. His rise in status began when he hired on as coachman for Lyman on an expedition to buy land in the Adirondack region for a new railroad line. Animosity toward the venture was strong, the natives convinced the railroad would before long destroy their pristine world (and so it would), and the animus peaked when half a dozen mountain men set upon Lyman and his lawyer with plans to tar and feather both.

While Lyman contemplated probable death by absurdity, Emmett garroted one of the attackers and bargained the man's breath for the two captives, an act of bravery that ensured not only his own security ever after through Lyman's gratitude, but also the education of any Daugherty heir not yet born, or even conceived, on this night of tribulation in the foyer of Hillegond Staats's mansion.

I speak now of the Irish, to tell of the Ryans and their misery and how it distracts me, for it is part of me: Joey Ryan—with broken nose, dead father, sickly mother—is surely myself in another guise. He and his family are the famine Irish, and they are villains in this city. It wasn't this way for the Irish when I was little, but now they are viewed not only as carriers of the cholera plague but as a plague themselves, such is their number: several thousand setting up life here in only a few years, living in hovels, in shanties, ten families to a small house, some unable to speak anything but the Irish tongue, their wretchedness so fierce and relentless that not only does the city shun them but the constabulary and the posses meet them at the docks and on the turnpikes to herd them together in encampments on the city's great western plain. Keep them moving is the edict of the city's leaders, and with obscene pleasure the Albany wharf rats and river scum (some Irish among those, preying on their own) carry out this edict by stoning the canal boats that try to unload newcomers here. It is no wonder the greenhorns grow feral in response, finding in this new land a hatred as great as that which drove them out of Ireland, that suppurating, dying sow of a nation.

Looking at the Ryans one could believe them carriers of any perniciousness: defeated, low in spirit, clad in rags, their skin flaked, pale, and dirty, their hair matted, their eyes raw with the disease of all victims. Who would invite their like? Who would give them bread or bed? None in this city today, and yet not quite none, for Hillegond is telling Capricorn to find them street- and bedclothes; telling Matty to cook for, cleanse, and accept them on their night of trouble here in this haven for ravaged souls.

People were breaking into groups now in the mansion. In the east parlor Will Canaday, here too for the music, was in dark communion with Lyman and Emmett. And so I sought out the person with whom I had most in common: Joey Ryan of the bleeding nose—but bleeding no more—seated now at the kitchen table eating Matty's chicken soup and corn bread. I told him I was sorry for his trouble and that my father was dead also, and at least he had his mother with him, but that my mother was dead and so was my sister, from the cholera.

"You're an orphan, then," he said.

"I am."

"What do they do to orphans? Do they kill them?"

"I've never heard of that," I said, "and they haven't killed me yet. But sometimes they put them in orphan homes, and sometimes they let them run loose."

"I'd fancy to run loose," he said. "Run loose till I grow up enough to solve the man who killed me father."

"How will you solve him?"

"I'll break his skull."

"You aren't big enough for that."

"I'll get bigger and find him and break his skull like he broke me father's."

"They'll hang you."

"Do they hang orphans?"

"They hang you for breaking a man's skull."

"Will they hang the man that killed me father?"

"If they catch him they might."

"I'll hang him meself, and then I'll cut off his head."

The Ryan boy was only a little fellow, but vengeance burned in his eye, and if he didn't break one man's skull before long, he'd break another's. Anger had taken seed in him farther back than the clubbing of his father, as I learned when I asked where he came from in Ireland.

"From a ditch near Cashel," he said. "The landlord tumbled our house and put us off our land, and me father piled all we owned in a cart and we pushed it till we couldn't climb the hill. Then we lived in the ditch and used the wagon as a roof. We could see the Galty Mountains from the ditch. They tumbled our house to make room for the landlord's cows. 'They're in grave need of pasture,' the landlord told me pa. Then we left the ditch, threw things away to lighten our load, and the three of us hauled the cart up the mountain, a terrible high mountain of four hundred feet it was, and me sister settin' the block at the wheel. We done it at last and got over the mountain, but goin' down the back side was near as troublesome as goin' up the front, and we almost lost the cart two or three assorted times. We begged food, and when we couldn't get any we stole it, or we ate grass. Then we went to me uncle's place on the road to Tipperary, and he took us in and paid for Pa to go to America. Pa himself is all of us that went over. The night before he left we had a wake for his leavin', with me ma keenin' for hours over his goin'. 'Ye won't come back for us,' she kept saying. It was near to bury him, is what it was. But he sent remittances and got us all over here, me and me sister and me mother. And didn't we all come to this town of Albany, because we couldn't fit in New York in the wee room Pa lived in. We was here just a few weeks and no money left when he got the foundry job, and then, a little after that, they broke his skull, the man did, the bastard man."

I talked more with the boy, but it was so painful I soon left him and thought of going to bed, for I could find no one else to talk to. People were all over the house talking of the coming fight and how awful it would be, and I knew I would watch it when it came. More death is what I thought.

Capricorn brought the news before sunrise that the warring factions from the foundry were assuming positions. Lyman said he feared that if word of the presence of the Ryans in the mansion reached Alfie, he and his cronies might seek satisfaction of the bloodlust that was upon them. The call went out for all in the mansion to be ready, and so Hillegond took a pistol from its case, loaded it, and sat with it in the lap of her night robe; and Capricorn laid four rifles and two more pistols on the dining table. I could not believe we were anticipating that men from the foundry would invade this grand hom to kill children.

As for Joey, he kept himself busy through th night creating a slungshot, a bludgeon fash ioned from a rock wrapped in oilcloth an wound tight with string. I saw him in an upstair hallway flexing his creation cleverly: slapping i with thuds against his left palm. When I saw hi mother, Margaret Ryan, and his sister, Molly at morning, they looked no less affrighted thar they had the previous evening, but immeasurably more comely with clean skin and hair and fresh clothing.

The tea was steeping in the kitchen, Matty was taking bread from the oven, and our cluster of souls was gathering near the warmth of the fire. The good feeling among us all seemed inappropriate with a death struggle in the offing, but I attest that thirteen years hence the same feelings would prevail in me when, as a correspondent in the war, I'd speak with soldiers and other journalists around a fire. We would drink coffee of the rankest order and convince each other it was fitting nectar for those about to conquer, or die, or both, or neither.

I must convey now that the fated stroke that aligned Alfie Palmer against the Ryans was an event of historical moment in Albany, for it defined boundaries, escalated hatreds, and set laboring men of near-equal dimension and common goal against each other. In years to come, periodic battles would be waged anew as a consequence of what was about to happen this day. These battles, which invariably took place on Sundays, when men were off work and free to maim one another, raged for hours without interference from the constabulary. The battles (the first was called the Ryans against the Palmers) were in time called the Hills against the Creeks, the Hills being the neighborhood to which Alfie Palmer, and others like him, had risen: high ground that represented a social ascendancy from where the Creeks lived—the low-lying slums, the mean and fetid nest of hovels on the shores of the Foxenkill, that foul creek where the shacks of the Irish erupted overnight like anarchic mushrooms and where the killing of Toddy Ryan took place.

Will Canaday returned to the mansion after breakfast, and he and Lyman, who had stayed the night, made ready to leave. I followed behind, and Joey Ryan behind me.

"No, no," Will said to us. "You stay here. Down there is no place for children. Take care of the boy here," and he pointed to Joey.

"It would be good for my education to see such a thing," I said.

"I want you alive to get an education," said Will as he and the others climbed into the carriage. Hillegond stood in the doorway as the

carriage pulled away, and then called Joey and me inside.

"Come in where it's safe," she called.

"No," said Joey, and he broke into a run, following in the wake of the carriage. "I'll get him," I said, and then I, too, was running, with Hillegond's screams fading behind me.

I couldn't catch Joey. He was fleet as a wild animal, and more fit than I for such a run, which was two miles or more across open fields, down the gully, and over the footbridge that spanned the Patroon's Creek, then up the hill on the far side, where I lost sight of him amid distant houses. It was my assumption he would head for Canal Street, where he lived, and it was toward that notorious thoroughfare that I headed.

Bells welcomed me to the populated city, and I saw women and children walking—toward church, I presumed. People were also moving into a vacant field that began the long slope eastward toward the canal and the river. At the crest of the field I saw forty or more men below me, standing, talking, many with clubs in hand. I sensed what they were about and that they would not be likely to give allegiance to Toddy Ryan.

I kept walking south and approached Canal Street, with its creek coursing beside it. This was the neighborhood called Gander Bay, named after the sassy fowl the Irish kept in the Foxenkill. It was a place of dread and danger, of woe and truculence. Its dirt pathways, which became deep and pervasive mud when it rained, were narrow, crooked, and violable by the sudden erection of hovels that would force a detour. Many of these hovels looked as if they'd been thrown together in a day, an upthrust of uneven boards with no windows, buttressed by sod or raw earth. Looming up among them was the occasional giant of an ordinary house, half a century old, built when this was open space and the crowd had not yet arrived.

I'd been in the area before, but not often. It gave no welcome to strangers. In one of the big houses near the creek lived two old brothers, Dinny Reilly, who collected grease from neighbors to make soap (for a certain amount of grease he'd give you a bar of soap), and Johnny Reilly, called Johnny the Cats, who went to jail at cholera time for throwing dead cats into the Foxenkill. Johnny won his name by living with four dozen cats, and the neighborhood rhyme about the men was known all over town:

Pitty-pat, sugar and fat,
Old Dinny Reilly
and Johnny the Cats.

Children were running free, and women were doing their washing in the creek, clothes already drying on tree limbs in Gander Bay's early sunlight. A man sat astride a backless chair in the doorway of one shanty, arms folded, pipe in teeth, back stiff and straight: prepared for events. Around him lay half a dozen cats and I took him to be Johnny of the rhyme.

"Good morning, sir," I said.

"It's a good morning if ye think it is," he said.

"Do you know where the Ryans live?"

"There's Ryans the world over."

"A boy. Joey Ryan. His father was Toddy."

"Aaah, those Ryans. Ye'd best stay away from *that* house."

"I know Joey, I want to help him."

"Then folly your nose that way and ye won't miss it."

My nose led me along a dirt lane, soft from the previous day's moderate rains, to a turning where I saw a crowd of people, and above them the head and shoulders of a young man in sweater and cap, standing in a wagon, haranguing the crowd with vibrant oratory: "This is what comes of bein' an Irish workin' man," and he turned his gaze downward, then up again to the crowd. "A good man . . . alive with the family last night . . . then murdered in front of his children . . . Toddy Ryan gone today . . . who'll go tomorrow?"

The silent crowd was with the man, nodding its reverence. Children on the edge moved away when his pause broke their attention. A gray-haired woman in a threadbare shawl pushed forward, her hair tight in a bun, her jaw jutting out with anger.

"I knew Toddy Ryan," she said. "He was a good man and he deserves better than you're givin' him. Look at him there, shameful." (We all looked toward the wagon, but I could see nothing because of intervening bodies.) "Bring the man indoors and wake him properly. It's sacrilegious, this is."

"Ah, close your mutt, woman," said the man in the wagon. "They'll be after you next, and then after your children."

"Where's this fight you're talkin' about?" a man in the crowd asked.

"We start at the foot of Lumber Street," came the answer. "There'll be clubs there for all. We'll move in a body and meet the divvil himself if he's a mind to fight us."

Satisfied with the answer, the questioner nodded and moved away. Others followed him, leaving an opening that let me see the wagon. Toddy Ryan lay on three boards nailed together, tied down with a rope around his waist so he wouldn't slide off, the boards slanted to allow us full view of his final image: hands folded on his chest, toes of his shoes too long and turned up,

ill-fitting clothes full of stains and holes—a runt of a man who, in addition to being horridly dead, had died in terrible health. His cranial cleft and the caked blood of his wound were the unforgettable focus of the cautionary tableau he offered us: Here lies a dead Irishman.

The speaker resumed his harangue and some in the crowd fell away. But newcomers kept arriving in a steady stream, and I learned that Toddy, since daybreak, had been on tour of all Irish neighborhoods in the city's north and west ends, a traveling theater piece: drama in the flesh. I asked a woman beside me where the dead man had lived.

"Over there, isn't it?" she said, pointing to a board shanty. I went to it and saw the door and wooden latch Alfie Palmer had kicked in. I called Joey's name but got no answer, then saw the interior was dark and barren, lit only by the light from the open door, and on the floor a broken clay pot and rusty tin cup. Whatever else of life's things the Ryans once owned had been removed by scavengers. Sunlight shone across the large bloodstain on the dirt floor where Toddy Ryan bled his profuse last.

I considered what I should do in this place, then stepped fully inside, closed the door, and shut out the day. The room became blackness of a deep order. I breathed the smell of earth and tried to imagine the life of the Ryans in this tiny room, then tried to imagine them living in a ditch with their wagon as a roof. Poor as we Quinns had been (and we had gone weeks without money, our food all charity from relatives), never were we dirt-poor, nor ever before had I understood the meaning of that phrase: to live day and night inhaling the odor of raw earth. I felt like a burrowing animal, and thought how the Ryans must have cursed all things and people that had brought them to this condition, and how they must have envied all who lived above it.

I stepped back into the sunlight and saw that Toddy, the wagon, the recruiter, and his crowd were all gone. I followed the lane and fell in line soon enough behind the wagon, the recruiter now seated and holding the reins but still hailing all gawkers with his spiel: "Hullo and listen to us now . . . look here on the corpse of Toddy Ryan . . . killed for being Irish . . . clubs for all at the foot of Lumber Street . . . we'll show them who we are . . . we'll send them to blazes . . ."

We passed Patroon Street, several dozen of us now in the growing parade with Toddy's wagon, and we moved north on Broadway in the warming sunlight of the morning. I could see the crowd of men looming ahead of us, twice as large as the group I'd seen on the hill. These were young men, mostly hatless and in shirtsleeves, vibrant in their gestures, anticipating the greater vibrancy of battle. A dozen or two smaller boys were fighting mock duels with the promised clubs that were being handed out from a wagon. I knew a few of the men: Walter White and Petey Carey from Van Woert Street; Midge McTigue, who had worked at the lumberyard with my father. I guessed that my father would have been with these men had he been alive. I could not find Joey Ryan but I saw Emmett, still unshaven, probably sleepless, and looking gravely upset as he grabbed two men by their shirts. I heard his words: "It's madness to fight uphill . . . madness to fight at all this way."

"Too late for that jabber, Emmett," one man said, knocking Emmett's hand from his shirt.

Emmett pushed through the head of the crowd to yell to them all, "Don't do this, men . . . we'll have a dozen corpses among us before the day is out . . ."

One hoarse voice called out, "By the Christ, let's get on with it," and at that the men, numbering sixty at least, strode forward up Lumber Street, some of them pocketing stones as they went. And then came the rap of the clubs on the cobblestones in steady tattoo: rap, step, rap, step, rap, step, rap—this in march cadence, which the men's feet found compatible; and they moved to it. Emmett saw me, came to me, grabbed my arm.

"You're not in this, boy. I say you're not."

"I was looking for Joey Ryan. He's out to get Alfie Palmer."

"That puny little thing after Alfie?"

"He wants to cut his head off."

Emmett shook his head. "Madness everywhere," he said. Then he looked at the men moving up the hill. "I've got to get with them."

"Are you going to fight, Emmett?"

"Not if I can help it. But maybe I can do some good."

"I'll go with you."

"No."

"I want to see it."

"Then see it, but stay on the sides."

I had no animosity toward Alfie Palmer, whom I didn't know; nor did I feel it my responsibility to champion the cause of Toddy Ryan beyond keeping track of Joey. I walked with Emmett and we caught up with the men as they turned a corner. Spectators joined us: old men, young men, women and children—all on the run from other streets as word of the battle spread; and we moved like a Roman parade, marching the gladiators to the arena. The men kept themselves a tight body as they marched, but when they sighted the enemy waiting two blocks up Colonie Street hill, some behind barricades, their cries went up: "Kill the bastards . . . go now . . . get 'em," and they broke ranks and

with wordless screams ran forward.

The Ryans, doing themselves no favor running uphill, ran into a hail of stones and paving blocks. They returned them in kind, but the Palmers, galloping downhill with the help of gravity and raised clubs, flung their bodies at the uphillers and felled sixteen into varying states of unconsciousness, losing only half a dozen of their own number in that opening charge. The smack of fists on flesh, the whap of club on skull collided with the curses and whoops of the warriors. Iron bars came into use, though the dominant fashion was the club, either of these tools cumbersome in close combat and some quickly discarded so as to allow fighting with fists and teeth, the battlers rolling and tussling into the proper position to gouge an eye, chew an ear. The battle opened itself and tumbled down new streets and into the pasture that sloped toward Van Woert Street, the growing mob of spectators ringing the fighters, moving with the most vicious, cheering them on to ever grander gouging and bashing.

There exists in the spectacle of a mass of men in fistic battle a love of punishment and pain, a need to be smashed in the mouth by life or else risk losing sight of what is necessary to survival. In the war I would see much worse, but I'd seen nothing before to equal the violence of this day: the ripped shirts, the bloody faces, the noses and ears bitten half off, the torn and bloody fists with their naked bones, men spitting out teeth, men unable to stand, one man shot but the pistol never found, a dozen men stabbed, two dozen with fractured heads, and some to die of these things and be buried in secret, one of the Palmers stabbed in both arms and never the same after. I saw Emmett remove from the fray the man who did that stabbing, a Ryan, but one not to Emmett's liking, and so he punched him, but once, on the side of the head, and the man fell like ten pounds of liver. Emmett took the man's dirk from his hand and rolled him down the hill.

Women ministered to fallen battlers, blotting their wounds, pulling them to safer turf. I spied a man whose face was the color of a ripe tomato, a scorch in full bloom, and I wondered, was this

Alfie Palmer? The raw look of him just might have come from a bath in boiling tea. (How had the Ryans boiled their tea in that closed shack? I saw no chimney, nor any opening for one. Did they live amid smoke?) Such was Palmer's face (and it *was* his) that it could not have heretofore eluded me, and I concluded he was a latecomer to the battle. But that face was known, and when it appeared, it magnetically convened the Ryan lust for vengeance, Alfie quickly ringed by more men than could possibly reach him with club or fist. He knocked down two Ryans with his club before he went under: under by choice, I must now think, for what reason other than guilt or suicidal madness could have compelled him to enter this battlefield of hate as a willful target?

He went down and felt the rain of kicks by Ryan brogans until a group of Palmers moved in for the rescue. But rescue the principal Palmer of the day they could not; for while other Ryans beat the Palmers back, a man all in Albany would come to recognize from this instant forward as Horse Houlihan, a lumber handler of immense size and girth, picked up the inert Alfie and, with great strength and unerring method, broke both his arms and both his legs, cracking each arm over bent knee, stepping on each leg and then snapping it upward, the reverse of its natural flex. The pain of the first break revived Alfie into a scream, but he then lapsed back into his coma and accepted the other fractures without a whimper.

The battle moved in splintered struggles away from the useless Alfie, the last of his reduction being the gob of spit Horse Houlihan loosed on him. And there he lay, a man of spoiled body and soul, a testament to what? To an incomplete understanding of the forces that had been unleashed through his loss of job and death of son; of even less comprehension now of what he himself had released with his random vengeance on the tragic Toddy.

Madness was insufficient designation for what had come of it, for what arose among the battlers was not pathology but something more conscious of itself: the final horrific begetting now blossoming in Joey Ryan, who came out of the crowd after the spectators had shifted with the flow. He found himself standing alone, moving slowly forward and then kneeling to perform with stunning malice the final coda of Alfie's saga: pummeling the near-dead face of his father's murderer with his slungshot as he shouted "Bastard man, bastard man" over and over, until I pulled him away and was, myself, struck by inadvertence with the weapon, no less painfully for Joey's lack of intent. My intervention came too late, for the slungshot had created bloody craters on Alfie's face and permanently blinded his right eye, a total blinding having been Joey's intention from the moment he espied the inert form.

I cuffed Joey and flung his weapon away from him, pulled him by the arm off the battlefield in the general direction of the mansion, and we left all Ryans and Palmers behind us. The Ryans, after several retreats, regroupings, and two hours of blood, finally routed the Palmers. Alfie Palmer survived to become the half-blind cripple of Arbor Hill, spent four years in jail after confessing the murder of Toddy Ryan, and lived out his remaining days as drunken beggar and infamous martyr to the unfathomable rhythms of rage.

Newspapers reported on the battle, calling it a feud between Papists and Americans, between the Irish and the Know-Nothings (who numbered in their political ranks the enraged nativists and assorted hybrid-haters bent on shaping a balance in this republic of equals by expelling the unequals). Will Canaday, in a departure from reasonableness, noted that a number of probable deaths, and an unmeasurable maiming of heads, had been effected in the battle, and he concluded: "It is not enough. Let them keep at it until there are no more of their heads to be broken." Will's view was widely shared, for it has been brought home to us all that the mob at fury's peak has no politics, no ethnic allegiance, no religion, but is a rabid beast with bloody claws, and must be neutralized.

On the Monday after the battle I went to hear Lyman Fitzgibbon as he mounted a loading platform on the wharf of his foundry and delivered his gospel to the work force at the hour of high noon. He announced he would sustain the cost of repairing Alfie Palmer's bones but would otherwise leave the fool to his fate; that he would, with great heart, give moral and financial support to the widow and children of Toddy Ryan; that his foremen would hereafter monitor all comparable battles and would note, for purposes of effecting terminal discharge from foundry employ, the name of any worker involved; that he would write his will to encourage his heirs and assigns to do likewise; that he believed in his soul that we are here on this earth to court peaceful ways in the name of the good Christ, and may those who choose otherwise boil forever in the fluid caldrons of hell.

The silent men, surely not persuaded into pacificity by any such pietisms, began the antcrawl back to their furnaces, boilers, puddles, and moulds to ponder the vagaries of existence. Then, in this peculiar ironbound world under one benevolent God, the making of stoves was resumed, for now and forever, amen. ■

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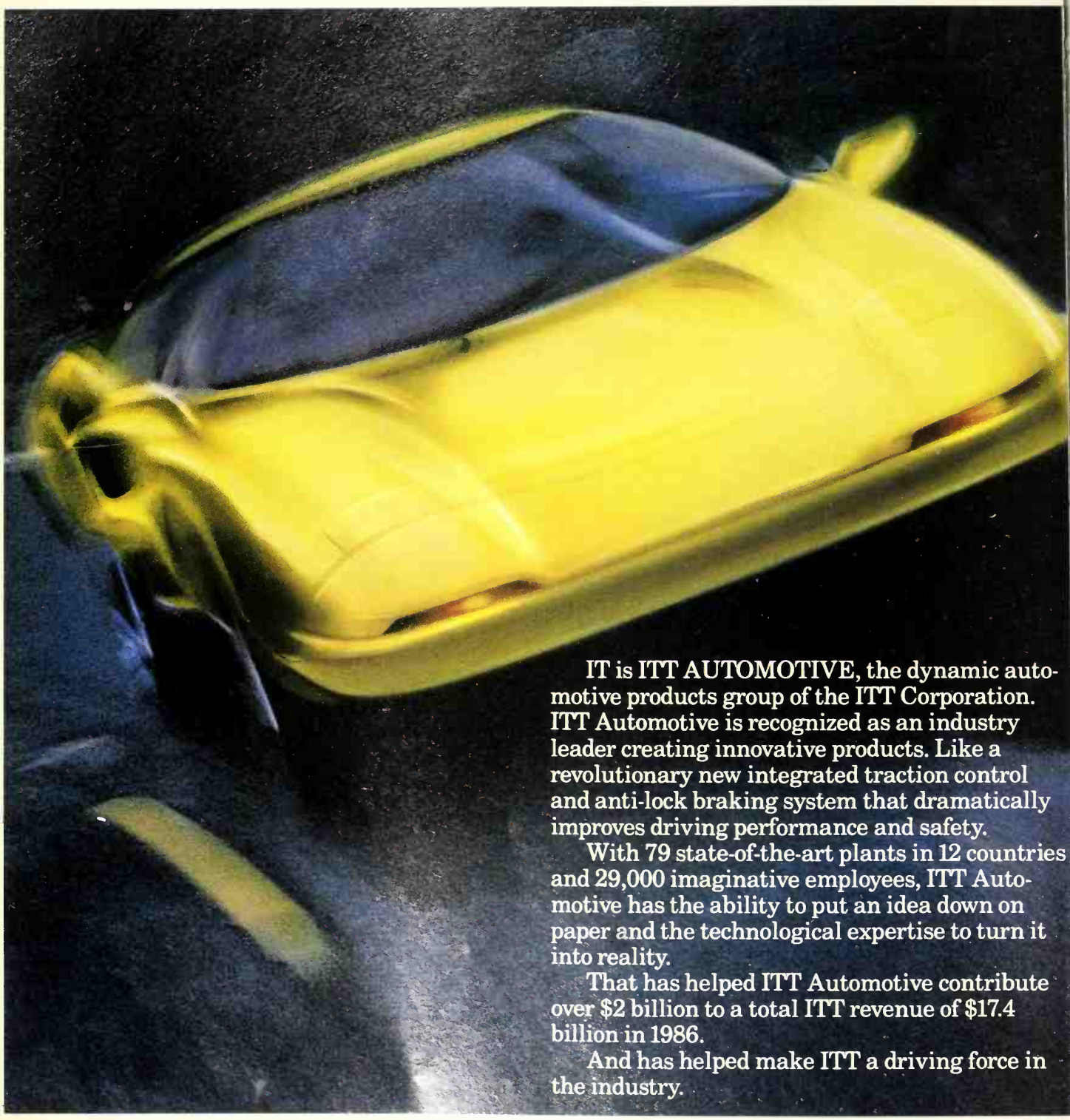

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BRAZIL'S JUNGLE BLACKBOARD

A test for conservation deep in Amazonas

By David Quammen

We are a speck in the sky above the jungle of jungles. The ceiling today is low and gray; the terrain beneath us looks decidedly inhospitable; our noisy little two-engine plane thumps gamely along at an unstable altitude. Five hundred feet below lies an unbroken expanse of canopy, a dimpled surface of treetops stretching away awesomely in every direction. From this vantage it seems a magnificent abstraction of flatness and chlorophyll—the Brazilian rain forest, *the Amazon jungle*, or at least one swatch of it. Its magnificent wealth of particulars is largely concealed.

Steam rises in cottony plumes from some clusters of trees—the vegetation's own moist breath is putting vapor back into the sky. One thousand shades of green, punctuated here and there by the crown of a single tree blossoming yellow or lavender. I turn my face to the window. Far below, I see five huge, blue macaws, gliding together above the treetops. Nothing else to be seen except foliage and steam. The floor of the jungle is not visible. And the clay-red slash of road leading north from Manaus—our line of orientation out of the airport into the jungle—has been left behind. "If the pilot gets lost," Tom Lovejoy shouts to me, "we could end up in Venezuela." We won't get lost. Thomas Lovejoy knows this area too well. Lovejoy is a scientist, and we are flying over his laboratory.

The plane banks. We come in lower above the treetops, until suddenly the treetops are gone. The jungle itself is gone. Instead, we look down now on nothing but Amazonian clay, clay covered with only the thinnest scrubby layer of vines and weeds and stumps. The tropical earth here is as bare and embarrassed as shorn pink sheep. The cutters and burners, paid to strip this land and make space for a few cattle, have done their work. And much more: they have destroyed the darkness and humidity and the shade-loving plants of the jungle floor. The wildlife is gone; most of the chemical nutrients are gone; all that once protected the soil from winds and erosion is also gone. Not just the rain forest, but the very conditions that make a rain forest possible, have disappeared.

Now the plane banks again, tipping my window toward another striking sight. Standing up out of the scorched flatness is a small patch of forest. It is square. It looks like a piece of shag carpet tossed down on a dirt floor. Around its perimeter runs a well-worn trail. "That's a ten-hectare reserve," Lovejoy says.

Ten hectares is equal to about twenty-five acres. This particular patch is Reserve #2,206. It is an island of virgin jungle in an ocean of man-made pasture. It was carefully isolated in 1984, at Lovejoy's instigation; since then it has been intensively studied as part of a grand scientific enterprise called the Minimum Critical Size of Ecosystems project. The project—stretching across tens of thousands of hectares in northern Brazil—is Tom Lovejoy's brainchild.

Our pilot lifts us through another banked turn and back over the clearing from a different angle. Now I see a second island, even smaller. This one is barely more than a tuft of trees. Like the first, it is outlined by a square trail, but the tiny patch of forest has lost much of that perfect squareness. There are fallen trees, tall but shallow-rooted rain-forest trees that were vulnerable to the pastureland winds. The canopy of this patch is breached and tattered. The shade-loving understory vegetation has shriveled. As the plane sweeps down for a close pass, I see a few

David Quammen's latest book is Blood Line, *a collection of short fiction published by Graywolf Press.*

How big must a rain forest be to remain a rain forest?

moving shapes just beyond the perimeter trail. Howler monkeys? Jaguar? No, these animals are bone white, no sensible camouflage for a rain-forest mammal. Spooked by the engine noise, they lumber around stupidly. Cows.

"That's a one-hectare reserve," Lovejoy says.

Even from hundreds of feet up, the basic lesson is unmistakable: one hectare of Amazon rain forest, standing alone, cannot remain Amazon rain forest for long. The lonely patch has been drastically transformed. It is only a husk of what it was. The direct cause of this transformation is not chain saws, not fire, not hungry cattle. The direct cause is "insularization"—this forest fragment is just too small to survive alone.

Then what is the numerical relationship between insularization and doom? How big must a rain forest be to remain a rain forest? If one hectare of this ecosystem is too small to sustain itself, if ten hectares is also too small, then how much is enough? What is the minimum critical size of a piece of Amazon jungle? In essence, that's the question Tom Lovejoy came to Brazil to answer.

Lovejoy is a soft-spoken fellow in his mid-forties. He comes to tropical ecology from a wealthy Manhattan family, and with a doctorate from Yale. He is youthful, mild-mannered, and could pass for a graduate student from Indianapolis, but he happens to be one of the world's most prescient biologists.

The Minimum Critical Size of Ecosystems project is a collaborative thing, involving many senior scientists, postgraduate researchers, salaried Brazilian woodsmen, and young volunteer "interns" who help with the fieldwork. The project is co-sponsored by Brazil's National Institute for Amazonian Research and the U.S. branch of the World Wildlife Fund. Nevertheless, in an unguarded moment, Lovejoy will speak of it as "my baby." The notion of studying islands of rain forest in an ocean of clear-cut—for clues not only to the fate of rain forests but to the fates of insularized ecosystems all over the planet—was his idea. It came to him in 1976, a well-timed flash.

But to make sense of his idea, to grasp its context and its potency, we need to go back a decade further. In 1967 a pair of young biologists, Robert MacArthur and Edward O. Wilson, published a book called *The Theory of Island Biogeography*. It was a small volume in a drab cover, filled with curve graphs and equations; its subject matter was seemingly narrow, as was its intended audience. Yet *The Theory of Island Biogeography* eventually revolutionized the study of ecology.

The focus upon islands was not in itself something new. Biologists had been aware of the exceptional significance of insular ecosystems ever since Charles Darwin set foot on the Galápagos Islands. Other pioneers of evolutionary biology, notably Alfred Russel Wallace and Joseph Hooker, had also gathered their best insights from fieldwork on tropical islands. Islands had been especially instructive to Darwin and his successors because the relatively small size and the quarantinelike isolation of island ecosystems combine to make patterns of evolution stand out with particular boldness. Generally, on an island, you find fewer species, and fewer relationships among species. This results in a simplified system—a schematic drawing, you might say, of nature's full complexity. Consequently, islands have served as the Dick-and-Jane primers of evolutionary biology; they help scientists to comprehend the more complex prose of the mainlands.

But MacArthur and Wilson added an important new element to the tradition of looking at islands. They posited that not just literal islands but *all* isolated, islandlike fragments of ecosystem are likely to end up with fewer species because extinctions of species will outnumber new arrivals. According to the MacArthur-Wilson theory, you could take a piece of natural ecosystem on any continent, turn it into a virtual island (a national park or a nature reserve, for instance, surrounded by cornfields or pavement), and in the fullness of time, that island also would become biologically impoverished. Inexorably, without further human tampering, species will disappear. Extinctions will be many, immigrations will be few. The original richness of the ecosystem will be lost.

Lovejoy's term for this phenomenon is "ecosystem decay"; others refer to it as "relaxation to equilibrium" and "faunal collapse." Most biologists agree that the process does occur, and that as the last wildlands on our planet are reduced to fragments, to nature reserves, to "islands," we face a crisis in conservation planning. The Everglades, the Serengeti in northern Tanzania, the high-altitude reserves for the snow leopard in Nepal—they might all turn out to be protected but nonetheless doomed.

A recent study of national parks in North America, by the ecologist William D. Newmark, adds dramatic evidence of the problem. As reported in the journal *Nature*, Newmark found a distressing pattern of species extinctions within national parks. He focused specifically on local extinctions (loss of one population of a species, not the extinction of a species worldwide) that occurred *after* the founding of a park, and he discounted extinctions caused directly by human interference. In forty-two instances over the past century, according to Newmark,

mammal species have become extinct from North American parks. Why? Evidently, for one reason: those parks are islands, surrounded by human development and suffering ecosystem decay. The number of extinctions in each park is inversely related to area and directly related to the age of the park. With the passing of time, our most carefully protected ecosystems—our parks and reserves—are dying, and the smallest ones are dying the fastest.

Yet biologists *do not* agree about two crucial matters related to this phenomenon. What exactly causes the high rate of extinction on islands and in islandlike fragments? And how can extinction be avoided?

These two questions subdivide into a handful: Do the extinctions occur because island species are held at low population levels by sheer limitations of area? Or do the extinctions occur because the limited areas include insufficient diversity of habitat? Should parks and nature reserves be bigger, even if it means that there are fewer, maximizing the factor of sheer area? Or should they be smaller and more scattered, but chosen to maximize habitat diversity? Will a single reserve comprising 1,000 square miles rescue more species of animal and plant, over the long run, than ten carefully selected patches of 100 square miles each?

Biologists have been battling over these questions—and rather fiercely, as scientific disputes go—for the past fifteen years. In 1976 the dispute broke open in the pages of *Science*. Researchers Daniel Simberloff and Lawrence Abele speculated that to use the by then famous MacArthur-Wilson "island" theory to justify a few large reserves as opposed to many small ones could be a disastrous mistake. "And when that was published," one biologist told me, "it was like dropping a match in some very dry tinder." The tinder flared to a conflagration of emphatic rebuttals. One set of rebuttals, clustered resoundingly, appeared in a subsequent issue of *Science*. And Simberloff and Abele eventually voiced their sense of wounded regret (but no recantation) at having been "cast as the bêtes noires of conservation."

Lovejoy had reason to follow that controversy closely. After finishing his dissertation at Yale based on fieldwork in the Brazilian forest (research that involved the capture and banding of thousands of birds), he became program director of the World Wildlife Fund in 1973. In this role, Lovejoy made recommendations about the size and design of nature reserves. But he never got into "the middle of that pissing match," he told me, because "I didn't see what could be added. I thought it would be better just to go out and try and get data."

Easier said than done. How do you collect information about ecosystem decay over time? One needs information not only on the community of species inhabiting an island now, and how the community might thin out ten or twenty years later, but also on what the community had included *before* it became a small, isolated fragment. "I used to worry about it a lot and discuss it with my scientific colleagues," Lovejoy told me. No scientist could predict how quickly species would disappear from an island, or how many would ultimately be lost, or how the rate and degree of loss would relate to the size of the island, without knowing which species had been there at the start. But almost none of the classic island studies included this information. No one knew just how many species had lived in the area of New Guinea, for instance, before rising sea levels at the end of the Pleistocene epoch separated the island from Australia. Without that kind of data, scientists could only make guesses about ecosystem decay.

Then, late in 1976, Lovejoy was invited by the National Science Foundation to a brain-

What exactly causes the high rate of extinction on islands and in islandlike fragments?

Photographs by Richard O. Bierregaard/World Wildlife Fund

How much sheer area is necessary for a fragment of wild ecosystem to resist decay?

storming session with a few other biologists, one of whom was Daniel Simberloff. "We were sitting around talking about the problem," Lovejoy recalls, "and all of a sudden, this project leaped into my mind."

It was, according to Rob Bierregaard, a biologist who became Lovejoy's first recruit to the project and served eight years as its field director, "one of those brilliantly simple ideas."

Like other brilliantly simple ideas, though, Lovejoy's only seemed obvious to everyone else after he had thought of it. What Lovejoy did was fit together—first in his imagination and then (this was the hard part) in the real world—two seemingly unrelated but complementary bits of knowledge. He knew there existed a dire need for before/during/after studies of ecosystem decay on islands or islandlike fragments. He also knew of a certain provision in Brazilian law which specified that any "development" enterprise in the Amazon forest—such as clear-cutting for pulpwood, or for cattle pasture—was required to leave 50 percent of the forest parcel uncut.

He flew down to Manaus, capital city of the central Amazon, and started talking to people about how these bits of knowledge might mesh.

He talked with scientists at the National Institute for Amazonian Research; he talked with government officials; he talked with ranchers who planned to clear-cut and burn huge tracts of virgin forest, just north of Manaus, and to pasture cattle among the ashes. With his diplomatic charm and his fluent Portuguese, Lovejoy coaxed them all into joining him in an ambitious experiment. The destruction of forest would be guided so as to incorporate certain geometric patterns: a patch here, another patch there, a bigger patch here, and the rest clear-cut. The ocean of man-made pasture would surround islands of untouched jungle. The 50-percent rule would be satisfied, and so would the needs of science. The islands would be rectilinear, mapped out by professional surveyors, and would span a range of sizes: 1 hectare, 10 hectares, 100 hectares, 1,000 hectares. They would be studied—before, during, and after the cataclysmic cutting and burning that would leave them isolated—by scientists whom Lovejoy would enlist.

To ensure the reliability of data collected, there would be replicate patches of all but the largest reserves; results from a 10-hectare patch could be compared with those from a 1-hectare, or from a 100-hectare, or from another 10-hectare patch in the same vicinity. Across twenty years of study, the patches would yield important information about the phenomenon of ecosystem decay. They would provide clues regarding the crucial mystery of minimum critical size: How much sheer area (or amount of contiguous habitat) is necessary for the fragment of wild ecosystem to resist decay?

The Brazilians agreed to the simple plan. Data collection on flora and fauna in the forest zone north of Manaus began in 1979. Then the cutting and burning commenced. Now the islands of rain forest are monitored by squads of specialized field-workers, and Lovejoy's brilliantly simple idea is backed by a $500,000 annual budget.

I approach the project again, this time from a different perspective, less Jovian, more footsore, in the company of two bird-banding interns, Peggy and Summer. Well before dawn we start walking out of camp and up a dark trail under the canopy. Elsewhere, on this reserve and others, primates are being sought out and studied, rodents are being watched, Brazil-nut trees counted. There are a dizzying number of angles to figure, a daunting multiplicity of questions posed.

This patch of rain forest is Reserve #3,304—100 hectares, the largest fragment isolated so far. We scuff along through fallen leaves big as busted umbrellas. We step over logs sprouting eager little fungi of lewd shapes and unearthly colors. Capuchin monkeys are yelping in the distance, and from somewhere come the wolf-whistle notes of a bird known as the screaming piha. The two women wear strap-on headlamps powered by large batteries hooked to their belts. I carry a small, foolish flashlight. Ten minutes of walking adds the first flush of sweat to a shirt still damp from yesterday. The trail is narrow and slippery on the slopes, a machete-cut tunnel. At this hour of the morning, just before light, a certain tiny species of fly haunts the understory, biting at necks and wrists and carrying a disease known as leishmaniasis. Leishmaniasis isn't fatal, I've been briefed, but a person definitely doesn't want the experience. For protection we depend on long sleeves, pants tucked into boots, drugstore insect-repellent, and luck. Mindful, too, of snakes, I watch carefully where I set each foot. From another of the bird-banders I've already heard the story of how Peggy once surprised a two-and-a-half-meter bushmaster at twilight on one of the forest trails.

Every tree trunk seems to be covered with lichen and termite tunnels. Lianas dangle down from above like a backstage rigging for this ecological theater; on a few unlucky trees *Clusia* vines of the strangler type wrap upward, tightening their choke holds as they slowly gather girth; and in the high limb crotches sit epiphytes, smug ethereal plants drinking suste-

nance straight out of the air. Even among the vegetation, there is evidence of frantic competition, of struggle, of the imperative that shapes living tissue to these garish forms of resourcefulness. We reach the line of mist-nets used for bird collection, though I remain unaware of that until I nearly stumble face first into delicate nylon webbing. I flinch, but a face full of genuine spider silk would have been worse. Somewhere down here in the Amazon, I've heard, lives at least one species of spider big and cocky enough to prey on birds. Gaa. The two women move quickly to get all sixteen nets open and ready before the first hint of daylight leaks down through the canopy—before the birds of the understory start to move.

We cross a sumpy black-water stream and climb the far slope. The nets are ready; open end to end, they form a diaphanous barricade stretching almost 300 yards. Farther along, we sit down on a log to wait. The headlamps and batteries come off. Broken canopy admits daylight and then actual shafts of sunshine. A hummingbird appears in the air before us to hover and gape. *Phaethornis superciliosus*, says Peggy, who knows a thousand things by their names.

After an hour of waiting and listening, we walk back to check the nets. Peggy untangles the first captured bird, examines and measures it; Summer records the data on an index card. At a glance they both know that the terrified little creature in Peggy's hand is a cinnamon-crested spadebill. *Platyrinchus saturatus*, Summer tells me. This individual bird is a recapture, already once banded and released; back at the project headquarters in Manaus, it will show on another index card and a computer entry. Handling it deftly, puffing feathers aside with her breath so she can see the skin, Peggy dictates to Summer that the bird has such-and-such sternum configuration, this percentage of fat, that amount of body molt, a wing length of so many millimeters, a tail length of so many, a weight of ten grams.

Summer records the data and I, fumbling with a damp notebook, try to as well. Summer has better luck because her pen is a special one suited to Amazonian field conditions of dampness and rain. We are here in the dry season, meaning that our constant wetness is mainly from sweat and humidity. Waterproof writing materials are standard equipment for field-workers such as Summer and Peggy, issued along with the headlamp, the hammock, the banding pliers, and the warning about leishmaniasis.

Peggy opens her hand. For a moment the

The destruction of the forest would be guided so as to incorporate geometric patterns: a patch here, clear-cut there

You and I can expect a day when the current notion of 'Amazon' will seem as quaint and dated as talking of the great herds of buffalo

dainty brown bird sits dazed on her palm, heart pumping desperately. And I have time to wonder about its future. How long can *P. saturatus* maintain itself on a 100-hectare island? Will this species eventually disappear, like the jaguar and the peccary and the capuchin monkey and certain species of frog? Or is 100 hectares of forest all the universe that a cinnamon-crested spadebill—a *viable population* of spadebills—will ever need? Will that universe still be sufficient for them without the incalculable contributions of the monkeys and the peccaries and the frogs? Is there a certain species of insect upon which the spadebills depend? If that insect goes, can the spadebills survive its absence?

The answers to these questions are years away. Peggy and Summer will have moved on to others things, but Tom Lovejoy will not.

The bird flies suddenly, vanishing into the forest. *Ciao,* Peggy says.

She rescues a spot-throated woodcreeper from the net. It's a reddish brown bird, roughly the size of a parakeet, with strange clawlike protrusions from the tips of its tail feathers that allow it to balance vertically on a tree trunk. Hence the name woodcreeper, Peggy explains. She gives it a leg band, dictates the bird's measurements to Summer, and releases it. *Ciao.* Twenty yards down the line she untangles something she calls a cinereous antshrike, a male, already banded. Spell that, I say. Then a scale-backed antbird, a female, which has also been caught and banded previously. Peggy does the examination, Summer records. The netting and recording will continue until midafternoon. It will resume again tomorrow before dawn.

It will go on for months until the wet season makes fieldwork impossible, and then be continued again next year by successors of Peggy and Summer, and again the year after, perhaps for another two decades. Back in Manaus, a computer has already recorded the details of roughly 40,000 individual bird captures.

I asked Peggy and Summer during our outing about the theory of island biogeography. They had no thoughts on that subject. Peggy's interest is bird ecology. Summer is a non-scientist, inspired to enlist for this hardship duty by her deep concern over the problem of rain-forest destruction. As far as they both are concerned, the project is about the ecology and preservation of the Amazon. Isn't that damn well enough?

Well, yes and no.

Later, back in Manaus, I put the same question to others. The scientists I talk with are fully aware of island theory and the controversy over its applicability, but seem to be much more engaged by their own concrete questions about monkey diets or butterfly distribution or the breeding habits of frogs. I asked one of the bright young interns about a certain book by MacArthur and Wilson, published twenty years ago. "Uh, no," she says. "It doesn't ring a bell." But she can tell me many things about the lives of Amazon trees.

By this time Tom Lovejoy is in the air again, flying down to Rio for a meeting. From there he will yo-yo back to Caracas, then up to Washington, and then next month back down to Brasília and Rio and Manaus. Being principal investigator in a scientific enterprise so ambitious and expensive as the Minimum Critical Size of Ecosystems project, he is continually occupied with what he describes politely as "a diplomatic dance." To him falls ultimate responsibility for keeping the project on course and the money flowing. He is the person who must stand before foundation boards, scientific conferences—and occasionally, television cameras—delivering a lucid, concise message about global habitat fragmentation and the problem of ecosystem decay. At all this he is quite accomplished.

But success has its drawbacks. Tom Lovejoy seldom has time anymore to walk into the forest and measure the wing of a bird.

Before long, all the world's wilderness will have been chopped and shrunk into islands. At the rate at which rain forest today is being converted to pasture, to pulpwood, to sheer laterite wasteland, you and I can expect a day when the notion of using the word "Amazon," as though synonymous with "vast, proud, unspoiled region of tropical forest," will seem as quaint and dated as talking of the great herds of buffalo out West. A similar process of destruction and fragmentation is also under way in the jungles of West Africa, Indonesia, Malaysia, Central America, Australia. The planet's temperate forests and wetlands are endangered as well. By the first decades of the next century these wild areas will probably be reduced to insular fragments of their former selves. Many among us—perhaps with the best of intentions—will talk of the small parks and refuges as though we have managed to save a full complement of the earth's biological diversity. Then, over time, ecosystem decay will steal some—or much—of what we thought we had saved.

It may still be possible, though, to avert the worst extremes of this quiet disaster. What we need first is fuller knowledge of the relationship between islandlike insularization and doom. For twenty years ecologists have been wondering, worrying, theorizing, arguing about how to achieve that knowledge. And now, one of them, Tom Lovejoy, has got himself a laboratory.

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PANIC ON THE BAHNHOFSTRASSE

Following the crash in the Old World

By Craig S. Karpel

When an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside, as fate.
—Carl Jung

As soon as the era ended, after last October's Black Monday, I caught the first available flight into Zurich. In the luminous gray fall morning the Paradeplatz was the eye of the financial hurricane. There was only the silent glide of streetcars and the rustle of newsprint. At times of common joy there is jubilation in public squares. At times of horror there is a reading of newspapers. The readers in Zurich had the same look of emergent dread, as if it were dawning upon all simultaneously that the obituaries they found their eyes drawn to were their own, and dated tomorrow.

The Paradeplatz is the center of the Swiss banking industry. On its west side sits the limestone powerhouse of the Schweizerischer Bankverein. On the north, undraped maidens support the balconies of the Schweizerische Kreditanstalt. To the northeast is the gabled head office of Bank Leu, founded in 1755, the oldest bank in Switzerland. A few doors up the Bahnhofstrasse stands the main building of the Schweizerische Bankgesellschaft. The Paradeplatz is where money smart enough to be secret runs for cover when the sky is falling.

The showcases of the Kreditanstalt display the kind of fashions men design for women when stock prices are going to rise forever. If not for a single window before which a speechless crowd stands, gaping at the Reuters monitor as if they were at the scene of an accident, one might think this was not a bank but a department store, and one would be correct.

Inside, the tellers' cages and transaction desks are interspersed with this month's exhibition—turn-of-the-century sports artifacts. Strolling from high-wheeled bicycle to riding habit to fowling piece to challenge cup, one can pause and sell the Standard & Poor's index short, or convert dollars to deutsche marks, or discover that one owes more than one has.

Like Las Vegas, the environment itself is conducive to parting with one's money. Yet instead of the clocklessness of Vegas, which would be unthinkable in Switzerland, one is simply surrounded by clocks. The realization that time is money is blurred by indicating the exact hour in so many cities around the world that one surrenders one's sense of time in the locality of the moment. And there is the incandescent dazzle of twirling multilingual plexiglass signs along the foreign-exchange counters, the managers as watchful as pit bosses, the cashiers as affectless as croupiers, and preeminently the velvet rope, unhooked for high-rollers only.

In the lounge in the southwest corner, one can easily distinguish the foreigners, who have rushed here to batten down their financial hatches, from the residents of the town. The latter know enough to sit, while the former seem to believe that quicker action is more likely if they stand. All are transfixed by an overhead carousel which flashes the prices of global securities. The carousel appears to be slowly turning, but those staring at it know that in actuality it is standing still while the earth revolves around it. Underneath there is a circular kiosk presided over by a sort of bartender of financial data. He knows that the information he serves today is a bitter brew, and so takes care to be particularly consoling.

A man in a tan cashmere topcoat approaches. "Can you tell me how much you're buying Krugerrands for?" he asks in an Australian accent. There is in his voice the forced calm of a man who must raise cash to meet a margin call.

"Well, let's see now," says the clerk. He consults a price sheet and tells him.

The Australian looks slightly hypoxic, as if he is finding the atmosphere up here in the Northern Hemisphere a trifle thin. "It's slipped a bit, hasn't it?" he asks. "I would have thought it'd shoot up. I mean, what with the dollar falling out of bed and all."

"Yes, it's odd, isn't it," says the clerk. "Perhaps it's the Russians."

"The Russians . . ." The Australian doesn't want to hear about the Russians now. He wants to hear that

Craig S. Karpel is a contributing editor of Harper's Magazine.

old has doubled in value while he as on the plane from Sydney and anceled out his losses.

"They could be taking this opportunity," says the clerk, "to sell into a rong market."

"I'll be back," says the Australian. I don't have the coins with me. They're in my hotel room, you see. My wife is there."

"Ah," nods the clerk. His wife is here. People tell you things and you od.

"Thanks," says the Australian.

"*Bitte schön*," says the clerk.

An American steps up. He is in his ate sixties and has not shaved today. He has the downtrodden look of a rinking man presented with a situaion in which he has no choice but to emain sober. "How's ICI doing?" he sks.

"It's down this morning. About 10 now," says the clerk.

"I just don't see how that can be," ays the American. "It's one of the iggest chemical companies in England. It's one of the biggest chemical ompanies in the *world*. But then I houldn't really care, 'cause I'm out of t at 11.90."

"That's good," says the clerk.

"No, it's not so good, 'cause when I honed in my sell order, the guy at the ank told me it was 14.55. But when I alled for confirmation, they said I got 1.90. I had 10,000 shares, so it's a ittle matter of £26,500. About 44,000! I came all the way from Arona for this. The only way to traighten out this kind of thing is in erson. I'm going to rake their ass ver the coals."

"Your account is with us?" asks the lerk, stiffening.

"Hell no," says the American. "It's with one of your competitors."

"Ah," says the clerk. But Switzerand's banks do not compete, any more than the Matterhorn competes with the Weisshorn.

"I'm going to bust their nuts," says the American.

"Mm-hm," muses the clerk, as if he were polishing a cocktail glass with a cloth and holding it up to the light.

I accompany the American as he strides unseeingly past the glittering Rolexes of the Bahnhofstrasse to the Zürichsee, along the quay where the

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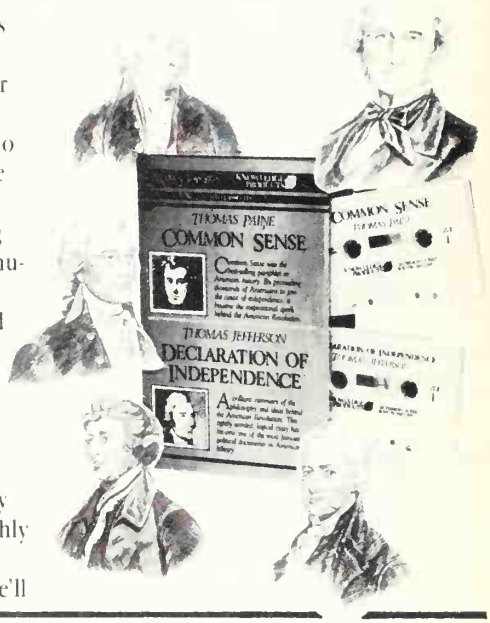

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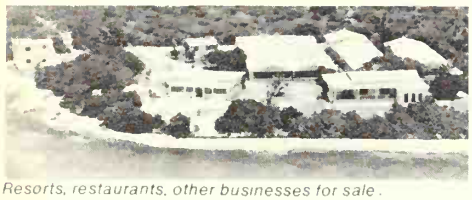

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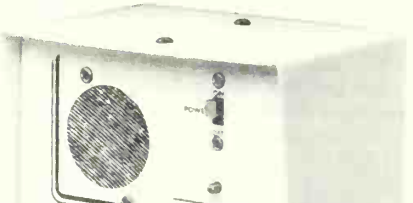

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lake steamers are moored. "I can't believe it," he says. "Ten days ago, my stocks were worth more than half a million dollars. Now it's down to two-hundred-and-something. Nothing like this has ever happened to me. Boy, am I ever going to roast their tail. They're going to find out who they're dealing with."

I find out who I'm dealing with.

"Retired military. Navy in World War II. Air Force in Korea. Then during the Vietnam War I handled a line of greeting cards."

Where?

"All over. Saigon. Da Nang. Qui Nhon. Nha Trang. Hue."

I tell him he's kidding.

"Hell, I was selling 1,200,000 cards a year there. Had twenty people working for me. Cleared about $120,000 a year on it. That's how I got involved over here. My commissions were paid into an account at a Swiss bank. I had to come here to collect."

I tell him I didn't know the Vietnamese went in for greeting cards.

"Not the Viets. The Americans! Christmas. Mother's Day. Girlfriends' birthdays. 'Thinking of you.'

Toward the end I got into the contemporaries."

I leave the American and cross the slow-flowing Limmat, with its bridges and steeples, and make my way toward the center of town past posters in Turkish urging guest workers from Kurdistan to liberate the sacred homeland; a spray-painted recommendation on a nearby sign reads DEPORT NIGGERS. I set myself the challenge of finding a single American product for sale. Here in one of the major emporiums of Europe—offering clothing from France, shoes from Italy, cutlery from Germany, cameras from Japan, carpets from China, and computers from Hong Kong—it ought to be possible to find evidence that manufacturing still occurs in the United States of America. I decide not to count such American exports as Ornette Coleman, who is in town for a concert, or Liza Minnelli, who soon will be, on the grounds that the trade deficit is unlikely to be reduced substantially by increasing the exportation of jazz survivors or daughters of Judy Garland.

. I reach the Beatengasse without finding anything made in the United States of America. In neither the Globus nor the Jelmoli department stores is there even a thimble from America. On the grassy square where Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746–1827) stands in a frock coat, educating a bronze ragamuffin, hope for the U.S. trade balance is buoyed by the presence of a busy McDonald's. By Zurich standards, the prices give a deserved break, with a Big Mac quoted at SFr 4.40 and six Chicken McNuggets for SFr 4.20. But I have to question whether any nation can close a $175 billion trade gap by exporting fast-food chains, and I continue my search.

Finally, I find what may be the only retail product of an American factory available in Zurich: a flashlight called the Mini-Mag Lite. The Mini-Mag Lite sells for about $13. I calculate that if every man, woman, and child on earth were to buy only two Mini-Mag Lites a year, every year until the end of time, our trade deficit would be practically eliminated.

With the dollar falling like a rock, it is possible to watch the goods offered for sale on the Bahnhofstrasse appreciate before one's eyes. In the window of Weinberg's there is an unpretentious men's calfskin parka for 6,850 francs, the equivalent of $4,707.90—investment clothing in the truest sense of the word. At 2:15 P.M. the franc/dollar rate drops from 1.4550 to 1.4425. Much has been said of the power of mind over matter, but the power of matter over mind is demonstrated convincingly when the price of a leather jacket jumps $40.80 in a single instant, especially when the viewer of this phenomenon can remember a time when it was possible to buy a leather jacket in Switzerland for $40.80.

Meanwhile, next door at Koch Optik, a pair of night-vision goggles, already a bit pricey at 17,775 francs, suddenly goes $105.86 further beyond my scope. With life's simple pleasures becoming less accessible by the moment, I feel a strong impulse to lock in the dollar cost of drowning my sorrows in bottle number 0611 of Ferte de Fartenay Grand Armagnac, vintage 1906, at 693 francs or $480.42 at

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What are the facts?

■ Israel is the only genuinely democratic state in the Middle East. It is committed to freedom and equality, and the rule of law. It embodies the fundamental values that are in tune with those of America and that America has traditionally supported.

■ Israel's military and political importance in the Middle East and its strategic position stabilize that entire area, including the oil fields of the Persian Gulf. It is a bulwark against the inroads of the Soviet Union. It is a most reliable partner in the promotion of Western strategic interests and in the stabilization of the Middle East. 25% to 30% of its budget goes for defense, compared to 7% in the U.S. and less than 1% in Japan. Israel has one of the best armies in the world. Its navy and air force are the major deterrent forces in the eastern Mediterranean against Soviet intrusion.

■ Israel effectively secures NATO's southeastern flank, without having a single American soldier stationed in its territory. Still, the superb military installations, the air and sea lift capabilities, the equipment and food storage capacity, and the trained manpower to maintain and repair sophisticated U.S. equipment are instantly at hand in Israel. It is the only country in the area that makes itself available to the United States, in any contingency. It is the only country in the entire Mediterranean basin area that has consented to the installation of Voice of America transmitters on its territory.

■ There is no other country in the Middle East except Israel that can be considered to have a stable government or populace friendly to the United States. There is much danger that any military aid to Arab countries, and military equipment given or sold to them, will suffer the same fate as the untold billions of dollars and priceless military secrets that were lost to our enemies in the debacle of Iran. Is Saudi Arabia more stable? Egypt? Jordan? Iraq? Kuwait? Judge for yourself!

■ Only a fraction of the aid given stays in Israel. By far the largest share remains in the U.S., where it is spent with American defense contractors. Peter McPherson, administrator of the Agency for International Development, estimates that every billion dollars of aid to Israel creates 60,000 to 70,000 jobs in the United States.

■ Compared to the $1.8 billion yearly military aid to Israel, the U.S. contributes on the order of $130 billion(!) every year to the defense of Europe and about $30 billion to the defense of Japan, Korea and the Far East. 340,000 U.S. troops are stationed with NATO and 30,000 U.S. troops in the Far East. In contrast, not one single U.S. soldier needs to be stationed and put at risk in Israel. U.S. military analysts estimate that the U.S. would have to spend the equivalent of $150 billion a year in the Middle East to maintain a force equivalent to Israel's.

There are many other benefits that the U.S. military derives from Israel. Israel is the only country that has gained battlefield experience with U.S. weapons. This experience is immediately conveyed to the U.S. Enormous quantities of captured Soviet weapons and defense systems are turned over to the U.S. military for analysis. Israel, in the light of its experience, continually modifies U.S. weapons systems. For instance, Israeli scientists have made over 200 improvements in the F-15 alone. It would be more in line with reality if military aid to Israel were classified as "defense" rather than as "aid". President Reagan said it well: "The fall of Iran has increased Israel's value as perhaps the only remaining strategic asset in the region on which the United States can fully rely". American aid to Israel is a two-way street. Aid to Israel is America's greatest defense bargain.

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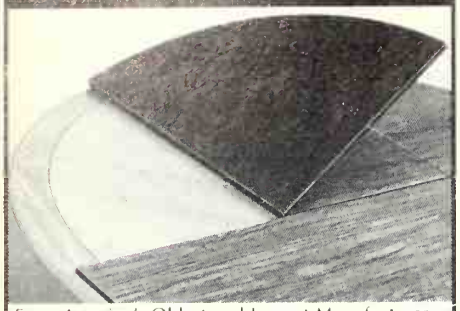

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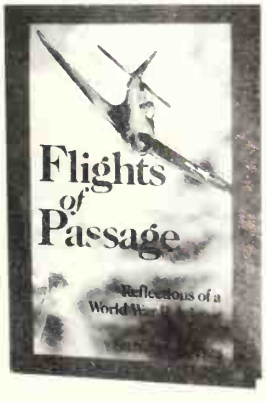

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the afternoon exchange rate. But I opt to defer the purchase, in the hope that swift and decisive action on the U.S. budgetary deficit may lower the price of old brandy half a world away.

With deathly suddenness, every material relation now seems arbitrary, and every certainty an overvalued doubt; so I seek out Carl Alfred Meier. A professor emeritus of psychology, Meier holds the chair of his friend and mentor, Carl Jung, at Zurich's Federal Institute of Technology.

Meier lives on a tranquil street near the Kunsthaus museum. The wooden stairs to his flat are covered with oriental rugs secured by brass rods. He receives me in his solarium. The professor is in his seventies and appears to enjoy being old and wise. He smokes with relish, alternating between pipes and cigars. "I must warn you," he begins, "I know nothing about economics. But this event presupposes that something in man's psyche has broken down. People no longer believe what they always believed—that the dollar, say, is worth so many Swiss francs. It is almost a religious catastrophe. There must be a tendency within the unconscious that breaks down old beliefs. Indeed, this situation has something of the quality of a religious collapse. You lose your security, you lose your convictions, you lose everything that is important for your existence.

"People are calling it a panic. Do you know where the term originated? It has to do with the ancient god Pan. Pan was not simply the Greek deity of fields and flocks. The name 'Pan' is similar to the Greek word for 'The All,' 'The Whole.' Pan was revered in every village of the Mediterranean world.

"At the close of antiquity, the crew of a ship sailing among the Eschinades Islands reported that they had heard a voice proclaim, '*Pan o megalos tetheke.*' 'Pan the greatest is dead.' As this news spread, it caused confusion and disorder. In a word, panic."

As I leave Professor Meier's, I run into the American. He looks five years older than he did the last time I saw him. I ask him how roasting the tail of his banker has gone.

"Oh, forget that," he says. "I'm the one that got burned. I burned myself. They didn't sell me out at 11.90. They didn't sell me out at all." He seems unable to fill his lungs with air. As he speaks his eyes focus slightly behind my head.

"When I originally ordered ICI, it came in units of four shares. I bought 2,500 units. When I called the guy last week, I told him to sell 2,500. So what did he do? He sold 2,500 *shares*. I've still got 7,500 shares! It's my fault. I gave him the wrong instructions. And the stock just keeps going down, down, down. You know what I am? I'm ruined, totally ruined."

I ask him why he doesn't sell the remaining 7,500 and cut his losses.

"Oh, I can't sell now," says the American. "It's much too low. It's ridiculous. ICI is one of the biggest chemical companies in the *world*!" ■

March Index Sources

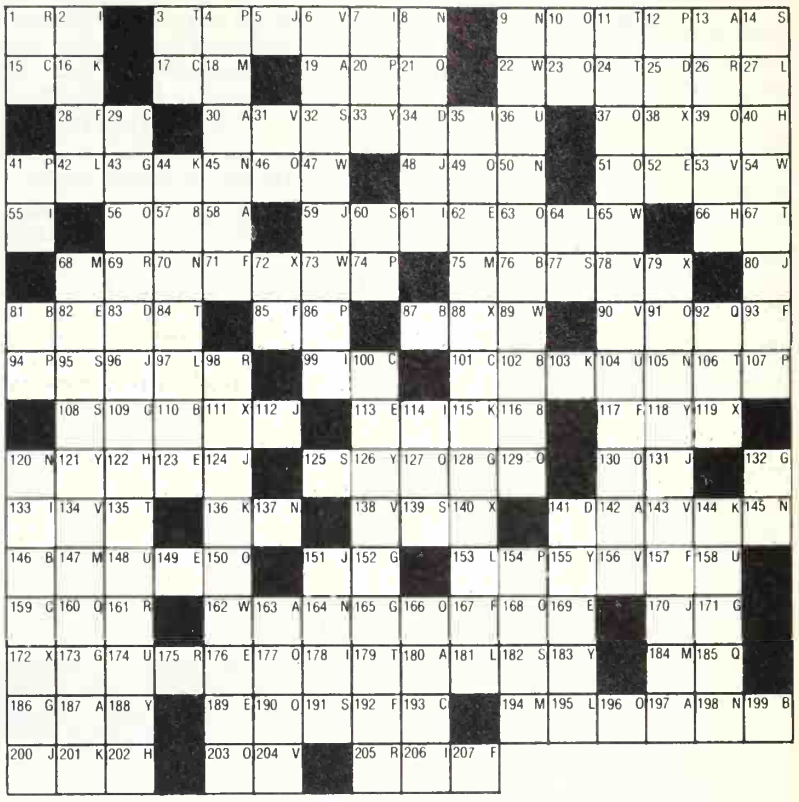
1 *Ma 'Ariv* (Tel Aviv); **2,3** West Bank Data Base Project (Jerusalem); **4** Agency for International Development; **5** Associated Press (Manila); **6** Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; **7** Gallup Organization (Princeton, N.J.); **8** SAMI/Burke (Cincinnati); **9** Bureau of Justice Statistics; **10** TASS (N.Y.C.); **11** *New York Times;* **12** International Olympic Committee (Colorado Springs); **13** David Evans, *Chicago Tribune;* **14** Battlefield Deception Project, U.S. Army; **15** Army Intelligence and Security Command; **16** Bush for President (Washington); **17** Jackson for President (Chicago); **18** J&B Scotch/*Spy* Poll (N.Y.C.); **19,20** American Association of Suicidology (Denver); **21** Adams & Rinehart (N.Y.C.); **22** Hickman-Maslin Research (Washington), **23** Congressional Budget Office; **24** Mexican Ministry of Budgeting (Mexico City); **25** Professor Jorge Bustamante, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (Tijuana, Mexico), **26,27** Ellen Hume, *Wall Street Journal* (Washington), **28** Debra Blum, United Press International (Washington), **29** Leeches USA (Westbury, N.Y.), **30** Environmental Protection Agency; **31** Society of the Plastics Industry (Washington); **32** Port Authority of New York-New Jersey; **33** Department of Commerce; **34** Immigration and Naturalization Service/ *Progressive* (Madison, Wis.); **35** Child Welfare League (Washington); **36** *New York Times;* **37** World Health Organization (N.Y.C.); **38,39** The Sierra Club (Washington); **40** State Game Division (Anchorage).

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 63

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 79.



CLUES

A. F. D. Roosevelt's hobby — 163 187 142 180 30 / 19 13 197 58

B. Institution promoting literary or scientific learning — 81 87 76 110 199 / 57 116 102 146

C. This was often "taken" during the Kefauver crime commission hearings (2 wds.) — 193 101 15 100 17 / 29 159 109

D. Drives; expeditions — 168 34 63 39 25 196 83 141 / 129

E. Decreasing, diminishing (3 wds.) — 52 189 123 169 176 113 62 82 / 149

F. 1939 film with Greta Garbo and Melvyn Douglas — 93 85 157 28 117 71 192 207 / 167

G. Immediately (2 wds.) — 165 173 128 43 186 132 171 152

H. Work — 66 40 122 202

I. Coarse type of goldenrod — 2 61 35 206 99 178 133 7 / 114 55

J. Brit. slang for stuck-up or pretentious (hyph.) — 5 170 80 131 200 124 96 151 / 48 112 59

K. Prevents, keeps back — 144 136 103 16 44 115 201

L. Tenzing Norkay's bailiwick — 97 181 64 42 153 27 195

M. Colors, adorns; describes vividly, depicts — 68 147 184 18 75 194

N. Carpenter's tool for cutting recesses in the edge or surface of a board (2 wds.) — 8 45 9 120 105 145 164 198 / 70 137 50

O. Eng. author and playwright ("I Am a Camera") — 190 56 91 10 23 51 203 130 / 46

P. Lives near — 86 41 12 74 20 94 4 154 / 107

Q. Small domestic fowl, usually for roasting (2 wds.) — 37 166 177 127 92 150 160 49 / 21 185

R. Symbolic devices or badges — 205 26 175 69 161 1 98

S. Problem addressed by "fat farms" — 95 14 182 60 125 77 32 191 / 139 108

T. Amorphous — 67 179 106 3 11 24 84 135

U. Conditions; limitations; time periods; expressions — 104 158 148 174 36

V. Perceptive, intuitive — 156 31 90 78 143 6 138 204 / 53 134

W. Moves (a child) up and down, as on one's knee — 65 162 73 22 54 89 47

X. 1843 work by Kierkegaard (2 wds.) — 140 72 172 88 119 111 38 79

Y. Glisten — 183 118 126 33 155 188 121

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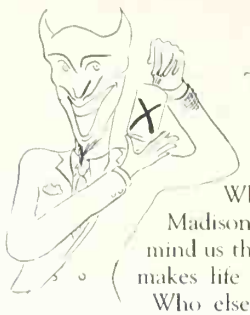

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NOTES FOR "MIRROR IMAGE"

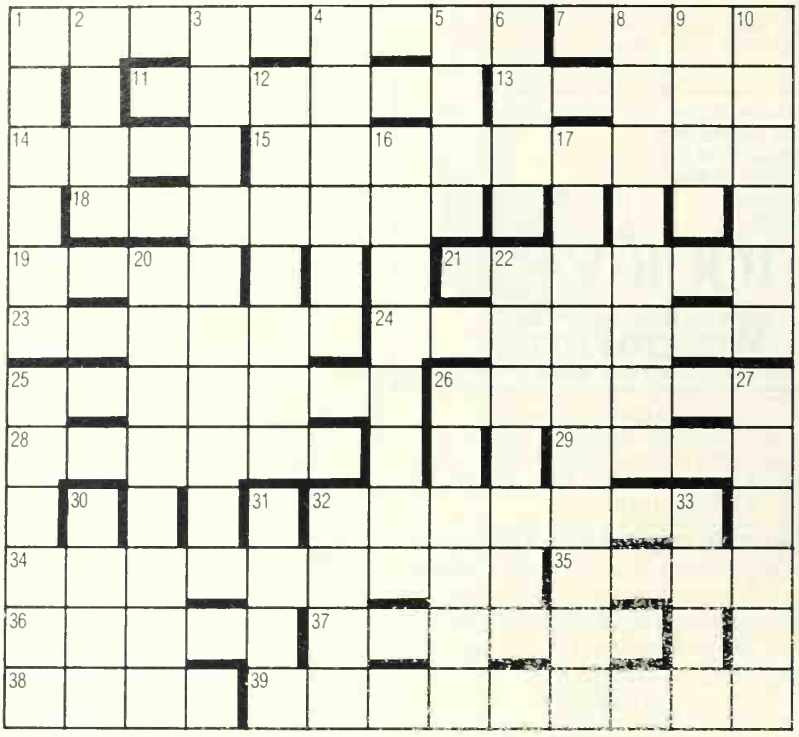
Note: The variations on CABBAGES are (A) synonyms in its sense as money (GREENBACKS, SPONDULICKS, MOOLA) and (B) varieties (SAVOY, RED, SKUNK), on KINGS, (C) houses (STUART, PLANTAGENET, TUDOR) and (D) creatures whose names begin with "king" (COBRA, MACKEREL, SNAKE).

ACROSS: 7. (mot)HER'S; PART, two meanings; 9. (gang)LION; (a)IRMA(n); 10. USUAL, anagram; PREEN; 11. PAS-TA; 13. INKS, anagram; NULL, hidden in reverse; 14. ART, hidden & LIT; 15. D-EBUT (reversal); ADEPT, anagram; 16. (w)ASP; AMP, hidden; 19. (s)UR(e)-AN-O; 21. LOCK, two meanings; RA(N)G; 22. MONICKER, anagram; NAMES-RON, reversed; 25. N-IKE; ALE-C; 26. DA(R...)KENER, anagram; 27. ARBITERS(r), anagram; A-POST-A-S(p)Y. DOWN: 1. CHAS-ER; 2. G(RATE)R; AERATE, "heir eight"; 3. N-A-U(pset)-SEA & LIT; B-RAVED; 4. AI(d)-RY; PAN-K, reversed; 5. DOUBLE BARS, anagram; 6. ALUMNA, anagram; SANEST, anagram; 16. ARMAD (anagram)-A; PANE(L)S; 18. ADMIRE, anagram; O/PINER/O; 20. O(RR)ERY, anagram of YO(u)RE; CINEMA, anagram; 23. C-HET (anagram); (i)S A KI(d); 24. RAM-O, reversed; EXES, hidden in reverse.

SOLUTION TO FEBRUARY DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 62). (PETER) SCHWED: OVERTIME! A (20TH CENTURY) SPORTS ODYSSEY. You can't play poker for matchsticks. It has to cost you real money to raise, call, or bluff, or it isn't poker. Many games in which it's customary to play for stakes, like contract bridge and rummy, can . . . remain the same game even if no money is involved, but . . . poker only for chips is not poker.

CONTEST RULES: Send the quotation, the name of the author, and the title of the work, together with your name and address, to Double Acrostic No. 63, *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's Magazine*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by March 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. The solution will be printed in the April issue. Winners of Double Acrostic No. 61 are Valentine Casey, Chicago, Illinois; Margot Davis, Ventura, California; and Lucy Finsand, Walnut Creek, California.

PUZZLE



Send a Letter

by E.R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

Before they are entered in the diagram, 26 of the clue answers must be changed into new words by shifting one letter to a new position. Thus PEAL could become PALE or PLEA (but not LEAP).

Clue answers include one abbreviation and four proper names; three of the altered entries are also proper names. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 79.

Across

1. Joins the bidding through telephones (9)
7. Cut down female that gossips about wife (4)
11. "Oklahoma" star, off-camera (6)
13. Took a picture with African animal in it (5)
14. Shave, the couple said (4)
15. Wriggling bait swallowed by a crocodile able to change position quickly (9)
18. Some artists and the others the lady's following (7)
19. MacHeath's somewhat smart (4)
21. Hint about what Otto I started (trick definition) (6)
23. During cruises, Navy's more than once the epitome of slow motion (6)
24. Less full, drunk recants (7)
25. Are Nets, in scramble, most ungenerous (7)
26. Minor problem: everyone allowed admission, drunk, before church (6)
28. Town in old song made up of three notes (6)
29. I'm alone . . . it's no good leaving . . . so long (4)
32. Caught in snowstorm or on ice is really stupid (7)
34. Turkish symbols: the heart of bellicosity, and Byzantine secrets without number (9)
35. Give generously, with pronounced authority (4)
36. Part of Austria or Italy returning to Latin (5)
37. Straightens out reorders in sale (6)
38. Two plants said to be passable (4, *hyphenated*)
39. See a girl converted, taking in last of papal audiences (9)

Down

1. Surgeon at first just manages, viewing instruments (6)
2. Used car missing front end to be a Rambler (4)
3. Man takes pretension to be cordiality (10)
4. King beset with complaints . . . these might be Tudor (6)
5. To suffer deprivation is indeed contrary in the French (4)
6. Bachelor, in call for help, is in tears (4)
8. Puts on roofing setup around small door (8)
9. Indian capital in photo taken by English (4)
10. Moves slowly in unfinished board game (6)
12. Raised a rumpus . . . $100 was missing (7)
16. The act of inducing jockeys into race (8)
17. Warning about uranium mixed into gin (10)
20. Sorrier when around for love, showing more signs of being wounded (8)
22. No louse could be free (7)
25. Discriminating religious group accepts the Spanish (6)
26. Awkwardly, I greet Trudy by a different nickname (6)
27. What hour hands show, heartlessly persecutes (6)
30. Fake it, or scream (4)
31. Copper, upset, left a Western campus (4)
32. Man, does this factor make a felon! (4)
33. Top pilot circles end of hangar . . . some land (4)

Contest Rules: Send completed diagram with name and address to "Send a Letter," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's Magazine*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. Winners' names will be printed in the May issue. Winners of the January puzzle, "Decipherment," are Philip McComish, Wichita, Kansas; Michael L. Reiss, Los Angeles, California; and Norman E. Colten, Ocean, New Jersey.

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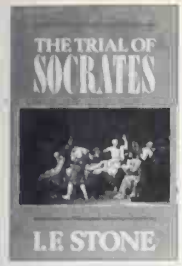

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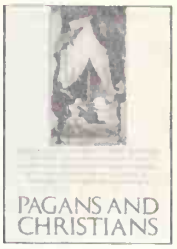

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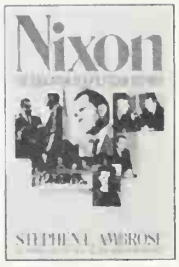

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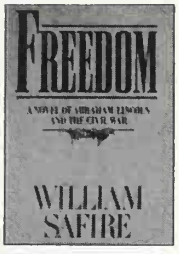

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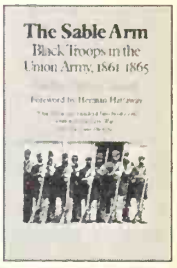

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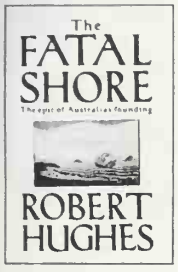

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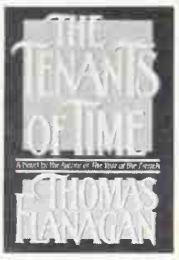

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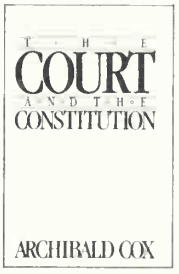

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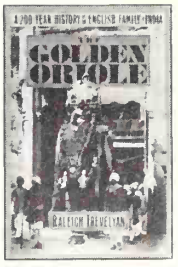

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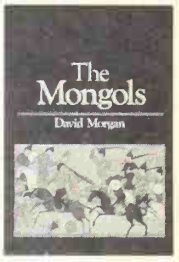

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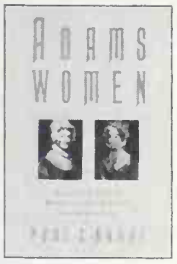

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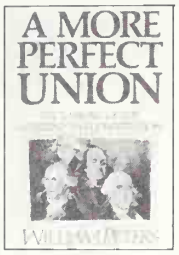

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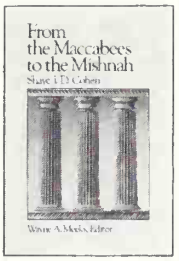

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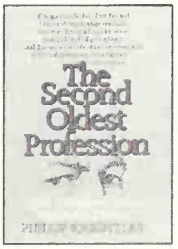

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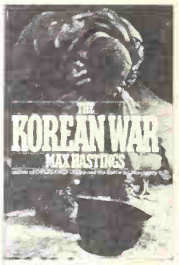

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LETTERS

Iran-Contra: What We Heard, What We Did

The discussion of the Iran-*contra* report by the six individuals in the February issue of *Harper's Magazine* ["Hearing Nothing, Saying Nothing: The Iran-*contra* Investigation That Never Was"] provides a distorted view of what the congressional select committees accomplished. Much of this is attributable to the failure of several panelists to understand the evidence before the committees and the facts of the Iran-*contra* affair.

With the benefit of hindsight, I will concede that there were a few things we might have done differently. Had it been possible to predict that the two select committees would reach an historic agreement to merge their investigation and hearings, I would have pushed for smaller committees. A committee of eleven or thirteen members would have presented itself much more attractively on television. More generally, I agree that we did not properly appreciate the impact of television on the hearings and that improvements in the format would have been possible. It is ironic, however, that politicians are now accused of not tailoring their work for the media. But other criticisms levied in the Forum are simply wrong.

The critiques by three of the five panelists—Joe Conason, Leslie Cockburn, and Walter Karp—stem partly from ideological concerns and partly from dissatisfaction with the evidence before the committee. Conason complains, "The problem was that no one . . . had the force of conviction to oppose the *purpose* of these activities—namely, to get the United States involved in a war in Central America." But the select committees were not created in order to debate our policy in Central America. Standing committees of Congress have been doing that for seven years. Instead, we were established to investigate improper and illegal governmental conduct in pursuit of a known policy, and that we did very well. Had we followed Conason's suggestion, the committees would have been embroiled in a major policy dispute, and the force of our charges relating to illegal and improper activity would have been lost.

Cockburn complains about the inadequacy of our investigation of alleged illegal activities by various private individuals. Again, we were investigating governmental misconduct. Allegations regarding private behavior with no government connection were outside the scope of our jurisdiction as established by the full Senate. Cockburn has the right to be

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dissatisfied with our jurisdiction, but that does not reflect on how well we did our job.

Other criticisms in the Forum are inaccurate and actually reflect the panelists' unhappiness with the state of the evidence. Conason's complaint that CIA Director William Casey's role was "never adequately investigated" is ludicrous. Every stone in this area was unturned [sic], and all the evidence that exists is out. If someone can tell me how to re-create shredded documents and interview a deceased man, I will undertake to do so.

In attempting to show that the committees should have considered recommending the impeachment of President Reagan, Karp refers to the comment by Secretary of State George Shultz, at a June 25, 1984, National Security Planning Group meeting, that Chief of Staff James Baker felt that a proposal might constitute an impeachable offense. Karp forgets to mention that this statement referred to a proposed solicitation wherein the United States would act as a conduit for the funds; that others stated the solicitation would be legal if the money went directly to the *contras;* that the President did not authorize the proposal presented at the meeting; that the subsequent solicitation involved direct contributions to the *contras;* and that the committee failed to conclude that the President's actions in this regard violated any laws.

The criticisms by Sam Dash are more galling since, as an experienced attorney, he should know better. His criticism that chief counsel Arthur Liman saw himself "as counsel to a *client*"—the committee members—is asinine. Last time I checked, the constitutional responsibility for the actions of congressional committees lies with their members. He implicitly criticizes Liman for not insisting that he be allowed to take the investigation "as far as it goes." In fact, Senator Daniel Inouye and I told Liman before he was hired that that is what we wanted him to do, and that is in fact what he and the committees did.

Dash criticizes the committees for choosing General Richard Secord as the leadoff witness on the grounds that Secord "didn't figure in until the middle of the story" and he "provided

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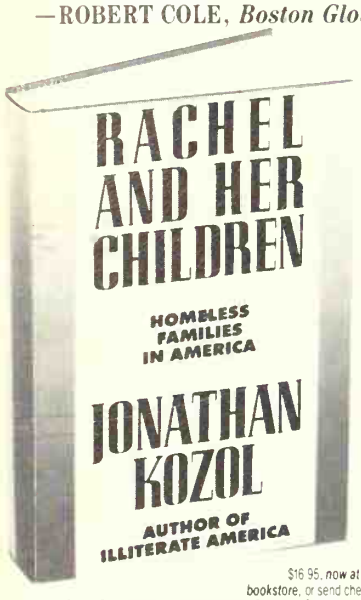

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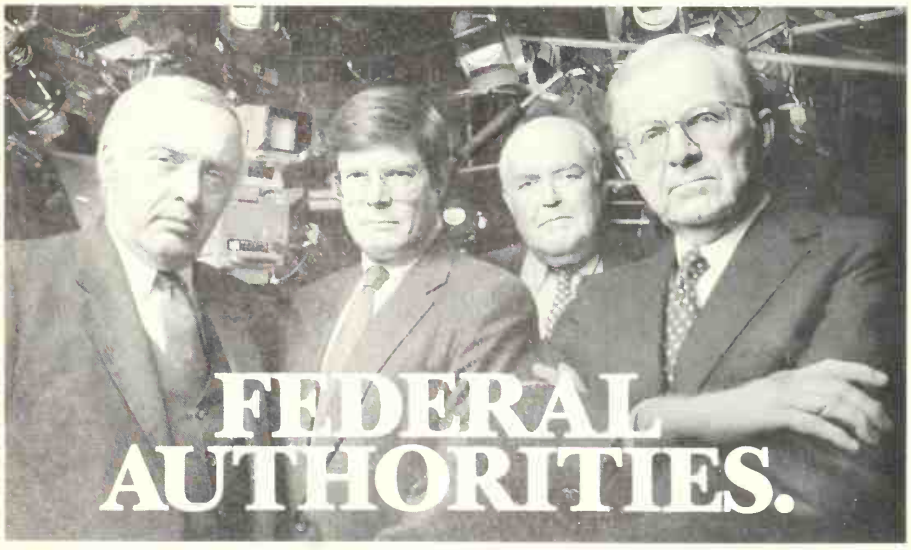

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no context." First, with the exception of Admiral John Poindexter and Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, whose testimonies we agreed to delay seeking at the independent counsel's request, Secord had more knowledge about the entire affair than any other person. Second, our ability to persuade Secord to testify without immunity (which we would not have given him) was a tremendous achievement. We could not have gotten that agreement at a subsequent time, as evidenced by Secord's later assertion of his privileges to forestall follow-up questioning.

Dash's comments about the agreement to limit North's depositions prior to his public testimony are equally irresponsible. In particular, his assertion that North's attorney, Brendan Sullivan, wanted his client to testify at the hearings is incorrect. Sullivan wanted to minimize North's exposure to the independent counsel, and he decided that keeping North away from the hearings was the best way to do that. The reason the committees agreed to limit North's deposition testimony in exchange for compliance with the subpoena was our concern that (due to the poor drafting of the Senate's civil contempt statute) legal action to compel North's testimony would lead to an extended court battle that we could lose either outright or, if North were indicted in the interim, on collateral grounds of adverse pre-trial publicity. Some members of the committees disagreed, believing we should take our chances in court. That is a legitimate alternate view, although I still believe we made the correct decision. Dash should do some investigating before insulting our intelligence by claiming that we fell for a bluff.

As a matter of constitutional law, Dash is correct when he notes that it is not necessary for a crime to have been committed to consider impeachment, and that the phrase "high crimes and misdemeanors" covers any wrongful conduct as defined by a majority of the House of Representatives. But for Dash to suggest there is circumstantial evidence supporting impeachment and that the committees' failure to recommend impeachment was due to cowardice is outra-

geous. The committees did not charge President Reagan with malfeasance because there is no evidence, direct or circumstantial, to support such a charge. The committees did not even have evidence that the President was aware that laws were being broken. We have hearsay, but unsupported hearsay has never been actionable. In noting that the President failed to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed," we charged nonfeasance—which is entirely different. If Dash can make a "clear and convincing" (his standard) case for impeachment, I would like to hear it. Incidentally, I do not remember the Watergate committee recommending impeachment.

I also disagree with the repeated references by Dash and others to the committees' setting arbitrary deadlines for the termination of the hearings and the completion of their work. When the Senate committee began its work in January, we provided a time-line for our work, both for internal management purposes and in response to press inquiries. Senator Inouye and I both stated, however, that the investigation would go on as long as necessary to get the full story. The record shows that we missed every deadline we set initially. In May, five months into our investigation, we estimated that the hearings would last through the end of July, an estimate that was one week short. The investigation ended when we had all the evidence, the hearings ended after all the important facts had been brought out, and the report was issued thereafter.

Dash noted that the Watergate report contained all the relevant documents and opined that he would like to have seen such thorough documentation in the select committees' report. The majority report contains more than 3,500 footnotes in its 427 pages; space alone precluded publication of all relevant documents in that report. However, a detailed chronology of all available material, testimony, depositions, and relevant documents has been prepared for publication.

There are innumerable other problems with the panel discussion that I could point to. But one comment by

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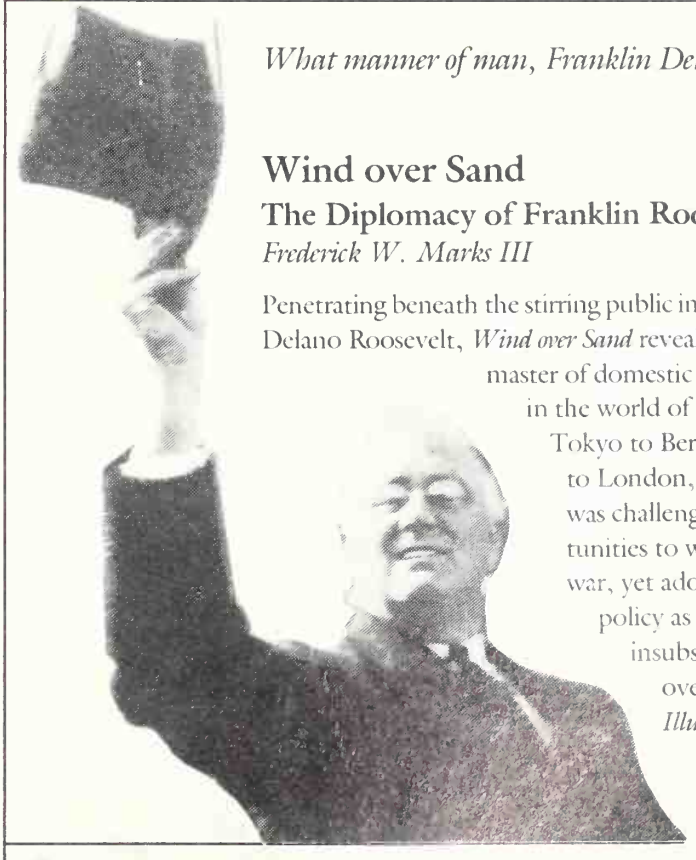

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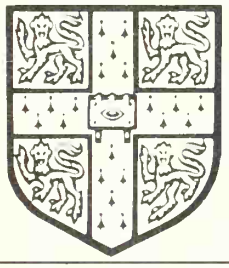

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Karp sums it all up: "From November 30 [1986] until this day, you have not heard one public man give one noble public utterance about the significance of lawless government and conducting a private war with a privy purse." Anyone who believes that did not watch the same hearings I attended, did not see the same news accounts I saw, and may not be on the same planet I am on.

Warren B. Rudman
Washington, D.C.

Warren Rudman (Republican, New Hampshire) served on the Senate Select Committee to Investigate Covert Arms Transactions With Iran.

Several of the panelists in the Iran-*contra* Forum were wrong when they said that the select committees acted to protect the President. In fact they seemed downright disappointed that we did not "get" him. But our goal throughout the investigation was to get the facts, not the President; to conduct a complete and thorough investigation, not to assess blame or guilt. Moreover, the stiff criticism leveled at the President in the Rule of Law chapter of the report and the last three pages of the Executive Summary belies the notion that the committees were "soft" on Reagan.

The select committees examined 500,000 documents and deposed or interviewed 500 witnesses. They advanced the public's understanding of what happened beyond the information provided by the Tower commission. For example, the Enterprise was exposed as a secret organization that conducted the government's business wholly outside our system of constitutional government. The financial records of the Enterprise were made public, and they revealed that millions of dollars went to personally benefit private agents. The committees uncovered false statements by high government officials concerning the administration's fund-raising for the *contras*. And the committees exposed efforts by high administration officials to cover up the Iran initiative. None of this was known when the investigation began.

We expect the ongoing investigation by the independent counsel Lawrence Walsh (with its access to records unavailable to the committees) to take the matter further.

In short, the Forum's criticism of the committee's investigation shows little familiarity with the contents of the report beyond the Executive Summary, and little knowledge of the evidence amassed and presented during our forty days of public hearings.

The joint committees have already begun to publish the full record of the hearings; this material will fill eleven volumes and will include thousands of exhibits. Before the House committee expired on March 1, it prepared forty to fifty volumes for publication; this material comprises more than 200 depositions and all the documents cited in the footnotes of the report.

Lee H. Hamilton
Washington, D.C.

Lee H. Hamilton (Democrat, Indiana) was chairman of the House Select Committee to Investigate Covert Arms Transactions With Iran.

Thank you for publishing the Forum on the important matter of the Iran-*contra* report. Unfortunately, the committees have not been able to learn the full truth. Many witnesses could not remember key facts. Some lied. On many important issues, recollections conflicted. The untimely death of William Casey left a significant gap. Numerous critical documents were destroyed. We will never know what we might have learned from more complete and truthful testimony and the preservation of key documents.

I believe, however, that the committees learned most of the critical facts regarding the Iran-*contra* affair. This process—the investigation, the public hearings, and the release of the report—should renew our confidence that in America every person is equal before the law, no person is above the law, and no end, however noble, justifies illegal means.

If we have learned these lessons, if we have reaffirmed our commitment to exposing the abuse of power in government, then the efforts of our committees have been successful. I believe we have demonstrated the integrity, strength, resiliency, and

flexibility of our system of government, and in so doing, we have renewed it.

George J. Mitchell
Washington, D.C.

George J. Mitchell (Democrat, Maine) served on the Senate Select Committee to Investigate Covert Arms Transactions With Iran.

The revelations in your Forum "Hearing Nothing, Saying Nothing" should be enough to make Jefferson come down from his pedestal and walk out of the nation's capital in disgust. Government officials involved in the Iran-*contra* affair evidently knew more than they were willing to state. Did they think that they would disturb the public by saying more? Did they think we would become undone? Such self-serving, condescending thinking resembles the approach of some of our current political candidates who read the polls in order to know what they should be thinking that day.

The panelists said in essence that our political leaders have the brains, courage, and consistency of microwaved scat. Why did Senator Daniel Inouye stop Congressman Jack Brooks from asking Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North about government plans to suspend the Constitution? Isn't there anything to be done about the contempt these politicians exhibit toward the people?

I have a suggestion. How about waging a political debate the way it ought to be waged, with a *Harper's Magazine* panel of experts as the debaters? I bet there would be public support from people all over the country who would like nothing better than to hear intelligent people debate real issues, no holds barred. That might get us pointed in the right direction.

Walter Kraus
Pacific Grove, Calif.

The February Forum was rich in shrewd observations about the Iran-*contra* affair and the congressional report it eventually generated. Nonetheless, one wonders whether the panelists would have been better able to conceal their desire for President Reagan's impeachment had the violations of law attributed to his administration been undertaken to help the "freedom fighters" in South Africa rather than those in Nicaragua.

Stanley Neustadter
New York City

Small-Town Cookies, Small-Town Cupcakes

I enjoyed reading Donald Hall's article about New Hampshire ["Cookies With the Candidate," February], but I couldn't help comparing it with Richard Rhodes's essay on life in Kansas ["Cupcake Land," November 1987].

Both Hall and Rhodes write about Americans who live far away from the nation's major urban centers; however, the two writers take sharply different approaches. Hall writes affectionately about the eccentricities of

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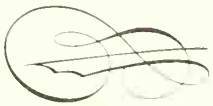

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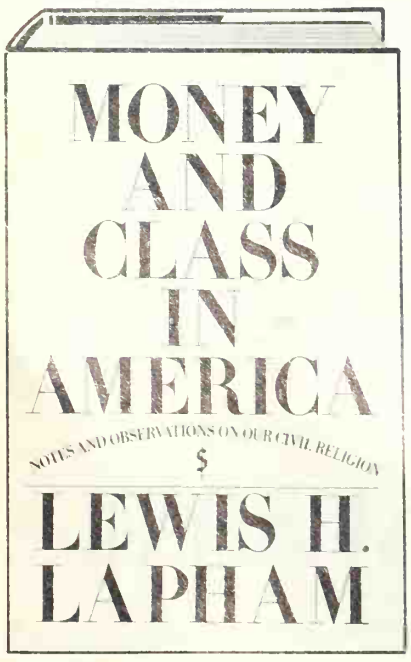

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small-town Americans, while Rhodes writes sarcastically—even viciously—about them, apparently because he finds these people to be less wealthy and less well educated than he is. Rhodes even implies that all Midwesterners live in small towns and that everyone else lives in New York City or Los Angeles, which he apparently believes are the only cities in America.

I'd like to make a suggestion. Why don't you assign the obviously good-natured Hall to write an article about small-town Midwesterners, and assign the caustic, venomous Rhodes to write about small-town New Englanders? Then Rhodes can criticize New Englanders for not living in New York City or Los Angeles. It might cure him of his notion that all small towns are located in the Midwest.

Eugene Dolnik
Washington, D.C.

Special Delivery

I was interested to read in your February Harper's Index that the U.S. Postal Service claims a 96 percent on-time delivery rate for first-class mail. Unfortunately, the on-time delivery of such mail in my congressional district is quite another story.

In response to my constituents' complaints about their postal service, I have been conducting mail surveys in Manhattan for the past six years. The all-time low for one-day delivery of first-class mail is 33 percent, but more recently the highest rate so far, 68 percent, was achieved. Still, this stands in sharp contrast to the New York City postal service's claim of 90 percent one-day service.

The trick is in how you measure "one-day." The postal service defines one-day as the amount of time it takes a letter to travel from one postal station to another—and thereby ignores delays in pickups and deliveries. A more realistic measure, the one that I and my constituents use, is how long it takes for a letter to travel from the corner mailbox to a person's home.

Bill Green
Washington, D.C.

Bill Green is the Republican congressman from the Fifteenth District in New York City.

NOTEBOOK

The sword in the stone

By Lewis H. Lapham

It is in private life that we find the great characters. They are too great to get into the public world.

—G. K. Chesterton

The statement that America lacks leadership has by now become so safe and so meaningless that it appears in every speechwriter's lexicon of unassailable truth. No properly outfitted presidential candidate would think of showing up at a supermarket or a press conference without a list of mournful remarks about the loss of the nation's leadership. So also every corporate magnate, cab driver, and newspaper columnist, pressed for a few weighty words on the topic of the American destiny—all agree that only leadership can rescue the nation from folly and ruin.

Having made the announcement, the speaker usually mentions one of several stock examples thought to possess the correct sheen of significance. Depending on the mood and the occasion, he refers to the trade or the moral deficit, to the illiteracy in the schools, to the mindless self-dealing characteristic not only of the credit markets but also of the media. All present nod their heads and know that they have been made wise.

Of course, says the choir of alarmed voices gathered in the ballroom or the town square—leadership. By God, it's the leadership that's missing. We can send a man to the moon, but we can't balance the budget or clean up the wreckage in Detroit, and do you know why? For the same reason that the country is being governed by a pack of fools. Because the leadership has gone out of our lives.

This ceremonial repetition of the word has an ennobling effect because nobody knows what it means. Most of the ladies and gentlemen who mourn the passing of the nation's leaders wouldn't know a leader if they saw one. If they had the bad luck to come across a leader, they would find out that he might demand something from them, and this impertinence would put an abrupt and indignant end to their wish for his return. When Christ showed up in Jerusalem saying the kind of thing that leaders have an awkward habit of saying, the authorities nailed him to a cross.

The lament for the nation's missing leaders has served as a melancholy *basso continuo* in the lower registers of the political debate since the beginning of the decade, and as long ago as 1981, I began to collect the more preposterous variations on the theme. Within two years of President Reagan's first inaugural, *Time* magazine published an essay entitled "Job Specs for the Oval Office." Hedley Donovan, the author of the article and a former editor of the magazine, listed thirty-one attributes desirable in a country's Prince Charming. "We prefer presidents to look like presidents . . . The president ought to be an athlete, or at least an outdoorsman . . . The president needs presence, dignity, a certain touch of distance, and even mystery . . . He must be steady and stable, housing his exceptional combination of gifts within a personality approximately 'normal' . . . The president needs superior intelligence . . . The president needs to be an optimist . . . We want the president to be flexible, pragmatic, capable of compromise—also firm, decisive, principled."

A few weeks later the *New York Review of Books* published a personal notice in more or less the same voice: "AM I BEAUTIFUL? Some people say so. WASP brunette, five foot eight, Ivy educated, professional success, graceful, competent, serene, nonsmoker, non-bitch, nicely proportioned in body and mind. Too intelligent and alive to be happy with loser or numbskull. If you're civilized, solvent, emotionally available, spiritual, epicurean man over 40, who loves his work and himself, seeking multidimensional companionship with grown-up divorced woman, please write. . . ."

What strikes me about the two advertisements is their uncanny resemblance. Both express the dreaming narcissism of people who expect to be ravished by Zeus. The author of the notice in the *New York Review of Books* is quite clearly a woman of intellectual consequence. A woman who has read Styron and traveled to Paris, who knows the difference between a haiku and a sonnet, who listens to Beethoven string quartets, and can pronounce the names of at least three South American novelists.

A woman so graceful and serene, accustomed to private showings and opening nights, obviously does not need to concern herself with the seedier sort of professor who reads secondhand books and still smokes Gauloise cigarettes. Nor does the lady want to have anything to do with weakness, emotional dismemberment, or fumbling in the backseats of taxis. She has had enough of lofts and existentialism, of men who wear their inadequacies like suits of ill-fitting clothes. Why should such a lady put up with inferior merchan-

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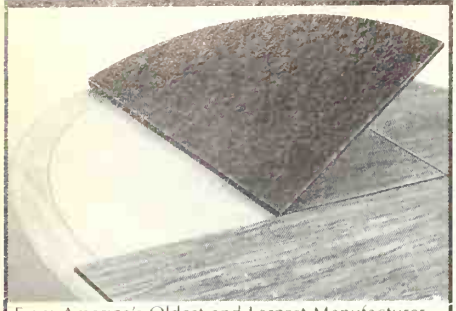

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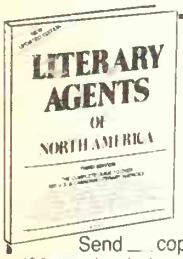

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dise? Given her education, her intelligence, her success, how could she be pleased with a man who did not reflect her competent perfection?

Similarly, how could Donovan bear to be governed by dwarfs? It is a wonder that he neglected to mention "civilized," "emotionally available," "epicurean." Perhaps he did not have enough space, or perhaps he thought that epicurean might be misunderstood in Omaha. Certainly he wanted a man of the world capable of a "multidimensional companionship" with the electorate.

It never occurs to the editorial writers that leaders practicing leadership might insist on renunciations which—if carried beyond the elementary lessons of giving up cigarettes and the third whiskey before dinner—might seriously interfere with everybody's habitual round of pleasure and hypocrisy. The voices in the ballroom want the kind of leadership that makes a brave show in the world but doesn't cost much more than the annual fees charged by Home Box Office or the Council on Foreign Relations. This is another way of saying that they would prefer, no matter how loud their protests to the contrary, as little leadership as possible.

The disingenuousness of the lament becomes apparent in the context of the supporting adjectives. The mourners speak of leadership as if it were an innate quality or skill, vaguely comparable to a talent for playing the piano or solving crossword puzzles. They think of it as a function of personality, a gift akin to a despot's cruelty or a salesman's winning smile. When casting around for exemplary proofs of leadership, they mention military commanders and football coaches. Probably it is safe to assume that the man most people have in mind for the job would bear a comforting resemblance to Muammar Qaddafi. A man of lighter color and broader education, of course, but still a handsome, authoritarian fellow who plays polo, commands the unswerving loyalty of his troops, and brooks no seditious gabbling on the part of a liberal press.

The sporting and military analogies establish a false comparison. Leadership consists not in degrees of technique but in traits of character; it requires moral rather than athletic or intellectual effort, and it imposes on both leader and follower alike the burdens of self-restraint. Edmund Burke put the proposition as follows: "Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without."

This is the news that the ladies and gentlemen in the ballroom prefer not to hear. For good reason. The United States was founded upon the egalitarian premise of boundlessly expanding will and appetite—for goods, for land, for experience, for wealth, for fame. Envisioning a romantic panorama of man at play in the meadows of paradise (of man set free from the constraints of laws and schools, free to constitute himself as his own government, free to declare himself a god), the Americans unloosed their restless energies in a direction precisely opposite to the one indicated by Burke. By holding to the maxim that "nice guys finish last," and choosing to look upon the acts of self-denial as the sure marks of "a loser," we make the most deep-rooted human conflict the stuff of musical comedy.

It is in the pit of every man's soul that civilization defend itself against barbarism, but like the Marxists whom we profess to despise, we change the venue of the argument to the playing field of politics, and by so doing we seek to make it small. By denying that man wages bitter and incessant war against himself—his nobler elements joined in mortal combat with the old and familiar enemy come against him under the glittering banners of ignorance, superstition, greed, selfishness, and fear—we avoid the struggle that releases man's highest energies, gives rise to his greatest thoughts, calls forth his most heroic victories. By steadfastly refusing to grant the authority of the spirit over external affairs, we conceive of society as a stadium in which the opposing teams (rich and poor, East and West, black and white, capital and labor, North and South) ceaselessly play a game of cap-

ture the flag. This conception of the human predicament makes ethics as superfluous as tragedy and substitutes jogging for thought, slogan for metaphor, novelty for art.

Anybody who would improve on this state of affairs comes up against odds heavy enough to interest the makers of Hollywood epics. Most men do not have much of an ear for sermons, and the desires raging in the blood rush headlong to whatever wine-dark sea washes the nearest Dionysian coast. Allied with the strength of the instincts, the intellectual bias of the age opposes the very idea of leadership. Of what use to preach the lessons of moderation to men who have proclaimed themselves kings? The egalitarian philosophers hold fast to the illusion that all men have been created not only equal but also free. They fail to notice that men must make their freedom and that the work is both daily and hard.

Against the world's weight, mankind possesses the greater energy of spirit formed by the mass of small but numberless acts of ordinary human beings going about the extraordinary business of telling the truth. Not the large and mystical expressions of human solidarity, not the religion of humanity as defined by Pat Robertson or the Catholic Church, nothing abstract. The negotiations at every dinner table thus become as central to the human story as dicussions at Vienna or Versailles; every hospital room bears witness to battles as critical to the human destiny as the battle fought at Gettysburg or Waterloo; every bedroom door opens into a desert or a garden.

The task that confronts the men who would be leaders is a task of the imagination. It has less to do with politics than it does with metaphor, less to do with the making of laws than with the making of words that allow men to see their immortality, not in their monuments or their weapons, but in their children. Maybe it is an impossible task, like the juggler's dream of the balls standing still in the air, but certainly it is of heroic enough proportion to summon leaders capable of drawing swords from stones. ■

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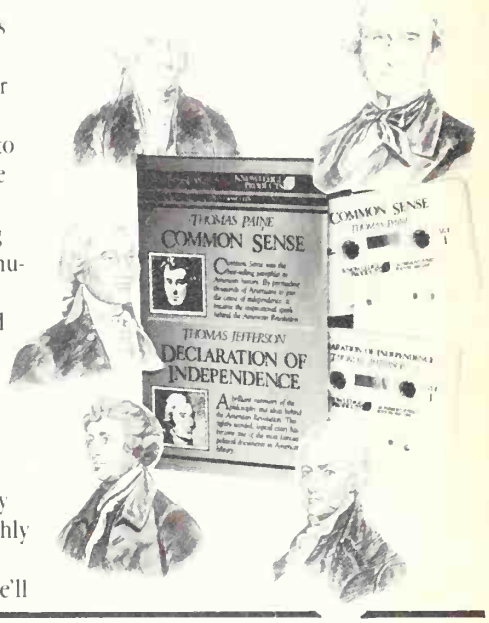

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HARPER'S INDEX

Rank of IBM among the leading computer export firms in Japan : 1
Percentage of Japanese cars sold in America last year that were manufactured here : 18
Percentage of cars sold in America by Chrysler last year that were manufactured overseas : 12
Percentage of world exports in 1966 that were sold by American companies : 18
Percentage today : 18
Rank of Richard Gephardt, among all candidates, in the percentage of his contributions that come from PACs : 1
Number of times that Richard Gephardt used the word "Establishment" in his Iowa stump speech : 25
In his New Hampshire stump speech : 3
Number of times the word "Christian" appears in Pat Robertson's campaign brochure : 0
Percentage of Americans who watch an evangelical religious program on television at least once a week : 25
Percentage of Americans who say that God has spoken to them : 36
Average number of Latin American Catholics who convert to evangelical Christianity each hour : 400
Number of tourists in Jerusalem who received psychiatric treatment for religious delusions last year : 152
Percentage increase, since 1967, in the number of mosques in the Gaza Strip : 158
Percentage of West Bank Palestinians who said in 1986 that violence is justified in pursuit of their cause : 87
Percentage of college-educated West Bank Palestinians who said this : 93
Percentage of West Bank Palestinians who are under 21 : 75
Amount the Iraqi government pays families upon the birth of their fifth child : $900
Percentage of Afghanistan's population that has been killed since the Soviet invasion : 7
Percentage of the Soviet Union's population that was killed in World War II : 10
Percentage of armed conflicts in the twentieth century that were won by the country or faction that started them : 39
Percentage of conflicts since 1980 that were : 9
Percentage of the casualties in all armed conflicts since 1980 who were civilians : 85
Number of historians employed by the Pentagon : 300
Number of "obscenity specialists" employed by the Department of Justice : 93
Average number of sexual innuendos broadcast on television each hour during prime time : 9
Percentage of all rapes in 1985 in which the victim and assailant were of the same race : 87
Percentage of all robberies : 65
Percentage increase, since 1975, in the number of Americans earning more than $1,000,000 a year : 280
Portion of U.S. federal revenues supplied annually by corporate income taxes : 1/10
Portion in Japan : 1/3
Number of times this year that the IRS has telephoned its own tax helpline to check its quality : 14,600
Amount of time, since last April, that Americans spent on hold while calling the IRS (in years) : 20
Estimated waiting time for a vacancy in a New York City public-housing project (in years) : 18
Percentage change, since 1981, in federal funds budgeted for subsidized housing : −81
Number of garages in Los Angeles that are used as homes : 42,300
Estimated ratio of youth gang members to police officers in Los Angeles : 6:1
Percentage of all nine- to eleven-year-old American girls who regularly use deodorant : 58
Percentage of fourth graders who say that there is peer pressure to try wine coolers : 34
Number of states that claim test scores in their elementary schools are above the national average : 50

Figures cited are the latest available as of February 1988. Sources are listed on page 76.
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READINGS

[Lecture]

THE SPECTER OF NATIONALISM

From God Land: Reflections on Religion and Nationalism, *by Conor Cruise O'Brien, published this month by Harvard University Press. The book is based on a series of lectures that O'Brien delivered at Harvard last year. O'Brien is a journalist who lives in Dublin.*

In the late twentieth century, nationalist movements often wear masks and fool one another, in a curious game of blindman's buff. Take the case of Nicaragua. No one who has any feeling for nationalism can spend any time in that country without being aware that nationalism is a driving force behind the reigning political ideology, *Sandinismo*. Yet the reigning wisdom in the United States is that the Sandinistas are not really nationalists at all. They, or at least their leaders, are crafty Marxist-Leninists whose real loyalty is not to Nicaragua but to the Soviet Union.

After visiting Nicaragua early in 1986, I became convinced that *Sandinismo* is essentially a nationalist movement with a Marxist-Leninist component, the latter heavily influenced by liberation theology (which is more congenial than Marxism-Leninism to the Latin culture). Latin American nationalism and liberation theology blend in a recognizable form of "holy nationalism" comparable to that of the early American Puritans.

Predictably, my interpretation was badly received by dispensers of the reigning wisdom. These are in general tidy-minded people whose concepts are arranged in firmly separated compartments. For such tidy-minded people, Marxism-Leninism and nationalism are, quite simply, incompatible. If someone who is on record as professing Marxism-Leninism carries on like a nationalist, he must be trying to fool people.

What I find most disturbing about the tidy-minded ones is that they seem incapable of learning from experience. In the 1950s they used to carry on about the Sino-Soviet bloc. If told that the Chinese communists were also Chinese nationalists, they smiled the superior smile of those who know that such things cannot be. And even after the breach between China and the Soviet Union demonstrated in an earthshaking manner that these people had been quite wrong, they continued to reason exactly as before. They knew that the Vietcong could not be nationalists. And they know the same about the Sandinistas today.

Marxism has a strong appeal in Third World countries *precisely to nationalists*. The appeal is multifaceted. To begin with, the Third World nationalist feels that his country is being, or has been, or is in danger of being, humiliated and exploited by international capitalism, or one particular capitalist country. The nationalist generally considers the capitalist class of his own country, or many of its members, as traitors who have sold out to foreigners. Under such conditions Marxism-as-analysis is inherently attractive: the analysis may not be right, but it is on the right side, which is more to the point.

Marxism-as-assurance—Marxism's doctrine of historical necessity—is even more attractive to Third World nationalists. If you have to fight against what appear to be overwhelming odds, it is good to know that the god of History is on your side and victory is certain eventually.

"Army Float, Independence Day, Nebaj, Quiché," from Guatemala: Eternal Spring, Eternal Tyranny, *by Jean-Marie Simon, published by Norton.*

Also, Marxism appeals to the universalist tendency present in all exalted nationalism. It offers an apparently secularized version of the Puritan or Old Testament vision. Marxists can see themselves as a kind of Chosen People, visible saints of a terrestrial religion. History has singled out, let us say, the rebel nationalists of El Salvador to play a very special role in the salvation of the world. So Salvadorian nationalism gets holier and grander.

Third World Marxist nationalists generally do not regard Moscow as the infallible interpreter of Marxism. Carlos Fonseca, for example, a founder of the Sandinista movement, took no notice of a Moscow ruling that Nicaragua was unripe for revolution. Yet Third World Marxist nationalists may have no choice but to gravitate toward Moscow. Any Third World nationalist movement that uses Marxist language incurs the automatic hostility of Washington, soon brought to bear in modern versions of excommunication and interdict. Isolated and under pressure from the West, such movements are liable to become dependent on Moscow—Cuba and Nicaragua are the most obvious examples. And then of course the dependence itself can be used as an argument justifying the policies of isolation that produced the dependence in the first place.

The politics of the self-fulfilling prophecy have seldom been pursued with such consistency as in Washington's misguided efforts to contain Soviet power by punishing exponents of Marxist ideology. Through these efforts the United States has contrived to cast Moscow in the most attractive role available to it: defender of Third World nationalism.

In fact, Soviet policy with regard to Third World nationalism has been marked not by Machiavellian planning but by halfhearted opportunism. The Horn of Africa provides a good example. There the Soviets began by supporting the Somali-nationalist and Marxist-speaking regime of Major General Siad Barré. During that period those analysts who like to make our flesh creep over the long-range plans of the Kremlin's chess players had a field day by the Red Sea; there were little maps with arrows showing the pivotal importance of the Port of Berbera and the Straits of Bab el-Mandeb. While the West had been asleep, the crafty Russians had secured possession of the geopolitical key to the most critical region in the world.

Then the same Russians, no doubt for some even craftier reason, suddenly threw that key away. Following Major Mengistu's coup in Addis Ababa, the Soviets switched sides in the Ogaden War; Ethiopia, the enemy of their old

client, became their new client. The Americans could have—and they now do have—Berbera and the Straits of Bab el-Mandeb, and Major General Barré and his Marxism. That had become the wrong kind of Marxism.

Considerations of national prestige and the prestige of individuals connected to national prestige determine Soviet behavior in areas remote from its borders. (Security is the determinant in areas contiguous to its borders.) Its clients in distant regions—Cuba, Nicaragua, Angola, Ethiopia, Syria, South Yemen, Vietnam, North Korea—are often taken as evidence of a consistent "tomorrow the world" strategy. Perhaps so, but I doubt it. They look to me like a somewhat random and ramshackle clientele, acquired through accidents of history and liable to fall off through similar accidents, as Egypt, Somalia, and Mozambique have.

The main value to the Soviet Union of these clients is that they serve as status symbols. They indicate that the Soviet Union is now a global power just like the United States. This flatters the nationalist feelings of the Soviet rulers and of Soviet citizens, and bonds them together. It also provides the national religion, Marxism, with enough apparent confirmation to shore up its shaky credibility.

If geopolitical strategy were the determinant, Somalia was surely the place to hold on to. But if national status is the determinant, Ethiopia will do just as well.

The management of holy nationalism is the greatest problem in peacekeeping today. Ideally, those responsible for international affairs ought to be able to understand and moderate the holy nationalism of their own country and to discern, even when disguised, the operations and limits of holy nationalism in rival countries.

Unfortunately, this may be too much to hope for. There are serious cognitive difficulties involved. Any nationalist movement inherently finds it hard to understand any other nationalist movement—if indeed it wants to understand it. This is particularly true of holy nationalisms. Rejection of the Other is an intrinsic part of the holiness.

Still, under the right circumstances, people can transcend these limitations, at least to some extent. There are some signs that circumstances today may be more propitious than they have been during the last six years. Gorbachev has shown a tendency to moderate some of the more obnoxious manifestations of Soviet holy nationalism. I do not believe that Ronald Reagan has any equivalent tendency. But perhaps the tendency will show itself in the choice of the next American president. It was Abraham Lincoln who spoke of the United States as "this almost chosen people." That "almost" is not the least precious part of America's great heritage.

"Can you prove it was a business orgy?"

ROTHCO

From Punch, the British weekly.

[Phrase Book]

GO STAND BY THAT WALL

From an Arabic-Hebrew phrase book issued by the Israel Defense Forces to soldiers posted on the West Bank and in Gaza. Below is chapter five, "Interrogation of a Suspect." Translated by Willis Johnson.

Raise your hands. Come here. Who are you? Lower your hands.

I'm a local resident.

Where are you from?

The camp.

What's your name?

My name is Yuseph Mustapha.

How old are you?

Thirty.

What is your occupation?

I'm a shepherd.

What are you doing here?

I'm going to my uncle's house.

Where have you been tonight?

Traveling on the road, by truck.

Who was with you?

Friends.

What did you do?

We were traveling.

Where are they now?
I don't know.
Where do they live?
In the camp.
What's your address?
The first house to the right of the post office.
And what are their addresses?
I don't know.
When did you last see them?
An hour or two ago.
How many were with you?
Three friends.
Where are they now?
I don't know.
Liar! Tell me where they are now.
I don't know. For God's sake, I don't know!
Tell me the truth. Where are they?
Maybe they went home.
Go stand by that wall.
Okay, but I'm thirsty—could I have a little water?
In due course you'll drink water.
Thank you, sir.
It will go better for you if you tell me what I want to know.
I'm telling you the truth.
If it doesn't go well for you, it will go badly.
Lieutenant, sir, I'm telling the truth.
Tell the truth! What did you do?
Nothing.
Watch out! I don't want to see you again at night. Get out of here fast.

[How To]

INTERROGATION MADE EASY

From "Benevolent Interrogation," by John E. Hess Jr. and Stephen D. Gladis, in the July 1987 issue of FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin. *The authors are FBI agents.*

"There's no use talking to that guy anymore. Even though we know he robbed that store, he'll never admit to anything." How often have we heard such a statement made about a recently arrested subject? Fortunately, many law-enforcement agencies have at least one officer who responds, "Well, let me see what I can do." The officer later emerges with a signed confession.

Fellow officers often attribute such success to unteachable, intuitive powers that few are able to develop. But let's examine that officer's interrogation techniques to determine if, in fact, his tactics can be duplicated.

[Chart]

BLUE BLOODS, SHOTGUNS, AND PICKUPS

Adapted from the appendix of "The DNC Nationwide Public Opinion Survey," prepared for the Democratic National Committee by Targeting Systems, Inc., an Arlington, Virginia, consulting firm. The chart shows, state by state, the percentage of households that fall into each of forty different demographic "clusters." These clusters, which were derived from census data by the Claritas Corporation, an Alexandria, Virginia, marketing firm, are used by the Democratic party to target voters.

Cluster Nickname	*California*	*West Virginia*	*New York*
Blue-Blood Estates	2.27%	0.00%	1.38%
Money and Brains	2.55	0.26	0.67
Furs and Station Wagons	4.84	0.49	2.75
Pools and Patios	5.57	2.42	4.16
Two More Rungs	1.44	0.22	2.59
Young Influentials	5.53	0.16	1.01
Young Suburbia	6.40	1.44	5.22
Blue-Chip Blues	8.30	2.33	4.92
Urban Gold Coast	0.25	0.00	4.33
Bohemian Mix	2.32	0.00	2.48
Black Enterprise	0.83	0.08	1.00
New Beginnings	10.27	0.60	1.36
God's Country	2.28	1.61	1.46
New Homesteaders	4.44	3.65	0.98
Towns and Gowns	0.44	2.36	0.82
Levittown, U.S.A.	2.38	3.14	3.79
Gray Power	4.00	0.92	2.60
Rank and File	0.96	0.48	1.00
Blue-Collar Nursery	0.35	3.17	0.85
Middle America	1.68	4.77	3.00
Coalburg and Corntown	0.24	3.33	1.39
New Melting Pot	1.78	0.00	6.22
Old Yankee Rows	0.29	0.04	7.61
Emergent Minorities	1.44	0.08	2.84
Single City Blues	6.51	0.63	3.65
Shotguns and Pickups	0.23	4.07	1.32
Agri-Business	1.91	0.94	0.75
Grain Belt	0.55	0.02	0.26
Golden Ponds	3.49	11.05	3.53
Mines and Mills	0.61	5.79	2.28
Norma Rae-ville	0.21	0.74	0.12
Smalltown Downtown	1.79	4.57	1.99
Back-Country Folks	0.49	14.11	1.43
Share Croppers	0.57	13.52	0.37
Tobacco Roads	0.02	0.12	0.00
Hard Scrabble	0.49	10.82	0.13
Heavy Industry	1.59	1.07	2.67
Downtown Dixie-Style	2.14	0.92	4.38
Hispanic Mix	6.17	0.00	3.79
Public Assistance	2.39	0.09	8.92

THE SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

The handcuffed subject is sitting in the interview room when the officer enters and says, "Let me take those cuffs off. Do you need to go to the rest room, or to get a drink of water?"

After granting any such request, the officer states, "We've got a problem here, and we need to talk about it, but we both know we can't until I'm sure you understand your situation. I have an advice-of-rights form which I'm going to read to you, but I'll bet you know as well as I do what it says, don't you? How about showing me what you know."

The subject responds by paraphrasing the Miranda warning. The officer compliments the subject on his knowledge.

The officer then begins a monologue about robbery. He states that although he does not condone it, he does understand how people in desperate circumstances might regard robbery as the only available recourse. A lack of opportunity due to social injustices, combined with a need to support themselves, can cause people to take desperate actions.

The officer then says, "But you already know everything I've just said, just as you already knew about your Miranda rights. Now let me tell you a few things you don't know. Sometime soon, you're going to walk into a store and point your gun at a clerk who is going to reach for a gun under the counter. You are now in the position of kill or be killed. Either way, you lose." The officer concludes by emphasizing the inevitable result of this pattern of crime—life in prison or death. The subject, suggests the officer, can avoid this fate only by breaking this pattern of behavior. The first step must be to admit that it exists. The officer adds that a man's life should not be judged on one mistake.

This benevolent dominance by the officer, combined with the ever dwindling list of viable alternatives for the subject, eventually results in a confession.

ANALYZING THE INTERVIEW

The officer's techniques for obtaining a confession are the time-honored principles of persuasion. Beginning with the incident in the garden, when the serpent convinced Eve to taste the forbidden fruit, man has been influenced more by persuasion than by threats. By examining the various ploys used by advertisers, we will see how the same principles of persuasion apply to interrogation.

CREATE A FEELING OF RECIPROCITY

Car dealers give children fifty-cent balloons and the parents purchase $14,000 automobiles. The interrogator, by providing token gifts of minor comforts, puts the subject in his debt.

PROVIDE COMPLIMENTS

Ads often succeed because they make the buyers feel good about themselves. The officer's technique of complimenting the subject on his initial knowledge of the Miranda warning was designed to do just that.

CONVEY A SENSE OF URGENCY

"Limited Offer" and "Get Them While They Last" are statements aimed at overcoming a buyer's inertia. The officer introduces a feeling of urgency by saying that this interview is the subject's last chance to avoid prison or death.

REARRANGE VALUES

Ads aimed at convincing people to invest in long-term programs deliberately try to rearrange values by appealing to the buyer's higher ideals: "Buying your grandson a bicycle would be nice, but let's compare that to the benefits of starting a college fund for him." Offering a future of respect and self-worth is the officer's method of attempting to supplant the subject's immediate goal of avoiding punishment.

These techniques are not new or known only to a select few. Countless authors, from Aristotle to Dale Carnegie, have set forth these principles. Those interrogators who fail to take advantage of this readily available information only perpetuate the myth of the "chosen few."

[Brochure]

SENSITIVE MEN, UNITE!

From a catalogue for the Midwest Men's Conference held at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota, last fall.

We invite you to join us as we stretch together to reach across the gaps which keep us needlessly apart. We'll spend a weekend together acknowledging these gaps and enjoying the amazing variety of beliefs, traditions, values, and cultural expressions that make up our "differences." As we come to know each other more fully we'll build greater unity among men! . . . Consider the many opportunities during the weekend for thoughtful, enjoyable moments with other positive, growing men.

SESSIONS

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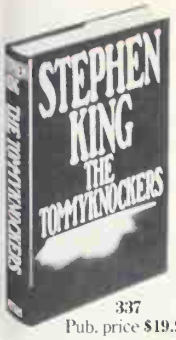

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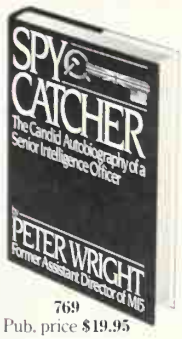

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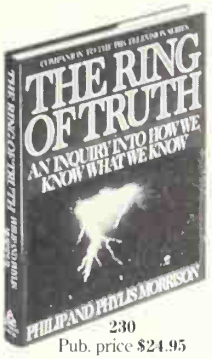

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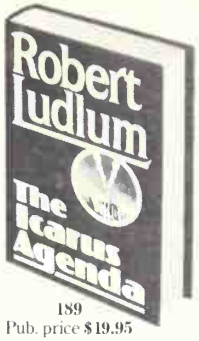

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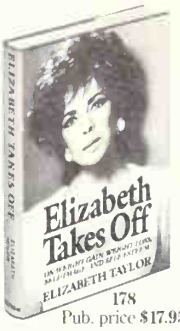

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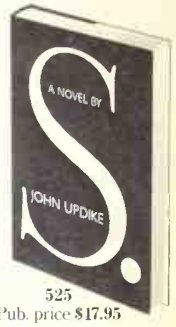

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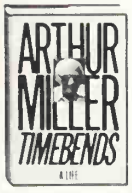

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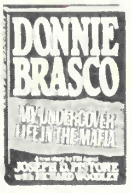

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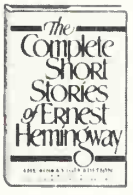

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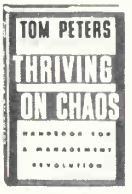

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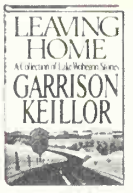

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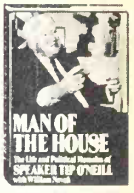

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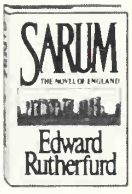

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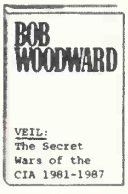

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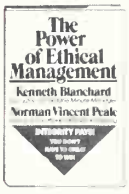

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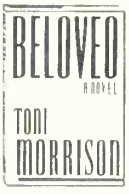

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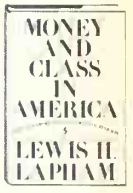

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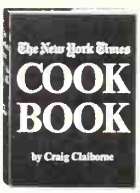

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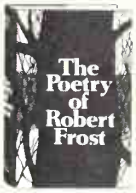

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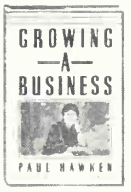

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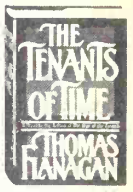

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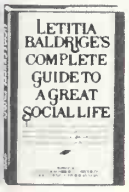

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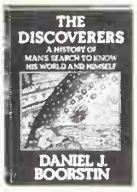

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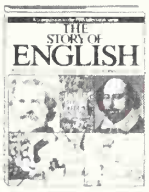

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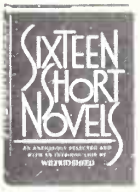

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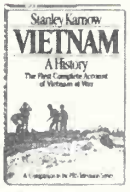

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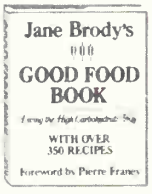

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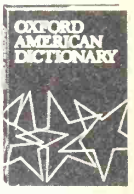

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[Calendar]

HAYSTACK BEEFCAKE

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JUNE
1988
Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday
1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8 9 10 11
12 13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30

From the Dakota Men Calendar, *published by F.O.O.D., Farmers of Ongoing Determination, to raise money for needy farm families across the country. The calendar presents fourteen "attractive, single, mid-western farmers" who believe that "you don't have to wear bib overalls over a potbelly to be a farmer."*

[Essay]

IDLENESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Excerpted from "Idleness in South Africa," by J. M. Coetzee, in a collection of his essays, White Writing: On the Culture of Letters in South Africa, *published this month by Yale University Press. Coetzee is a professor of English at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, and the author of several novels.*

One of the commonplaces in the discourse of the Cape of Good Hope is a condemnation of idleness, first the idleness of the native Hottentots and later that of the Boers. The theme first becomes prominent in accounts of the Hottentots written after 1652, the year of European settlement. Surprisingly little mention of idleness occurs in the writings of travelers who touched at the Cape before 1652. But as the Dutch begin to settle in and accounts of the Hottentots become more detailed, the theme is sounded more

frequently, idleness being described and denounced in the same breath:

> They are a lazy and grimy people who will not work... They are idle, and like to sit without doing anything. —Volquart Iversen, 1667

> Their chief work is nothing more than to dig up and eat... roots.... When they are satiated they lie down without a care. —George Meister, 1667

> The major work of the men is to lie about, unless hunger drives them. —Johann Schreyer, 1679

> They are very lazy, liking better to go hungry than to work. —Fr.-T. de Choisy, 1685

> They are without doubt, both in body and mind, the laziest people under the sun... Their whole earthly happiness seems to lie in indolence and supinity. —Peter Kolb, 1719

Idleness, indolence, sloth, laziness, torpor—these terms are meant both to define a Hottentot vice and to distance the writer from it. Nowhere in the great echo chamber of the discourse of the Cape is a voice raised to ask whether the life of the Hottentot may not be a version of life before the Fall (as Bartolomé de las Casas suggested with respect to the Indians of the New World), a life in which man is not yet condemned to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, but instead may spend his days dozing in the sun, or in the shade when the sun grows too hot, half-aware of the singing of the birds and the breeze on his skin, bestirring himself to eat when hunger overtakes him, enjoying a pipe of tobacco when it is available, at one with his surroundings and unreflectively content. The stratagem the discourse might conceivably have resorted to—that of asserting an analogy between the Hottentot and unfallen man, between the Cape and Eden and via this analogy claiming a tenuous legitimacy—is never used.

The charge of idleness often comes together with, and sometimes as the climax to, a set of other characterizations: that the Hottentots are ugly, that they never wash but on the contrary smear themselves with animal fat, that their food is unclean, that their meat is barely cooked, that they wear skins, that they live in the meanest of huts, that male and female mix indiscriminately, that their speech is not like that of human beings. What is common to these charges is that they mark the Hottentot as *underdeveloped*—underdeveloped not only by the standard of the European but by the standard of Man.

Condemning the Hottentot for his idleness, the early discourse of the Cape effectively excludes him from Eden by deciding that, though he is human, he is not in the line of descent that leads from Adam via a life of toil to civilized man. The Hottentot, that is to say, is not an

[Second References]

OTHERWISE KNOWN AS

From a list of "second references," compiled by night copy editors at the Duluth News-Tribune. *A second reference is a newspaper term for a phrase used by a reporter to avoid repeating standard descriptions of persons, places, and things. The list, gleaned from Knight-Ridder and Associated Press news stories, is updated regularly and circulated among staffers at the* News-Tribune *and other newspapers.*

Anatoly Dobrynin: the portly career diplomat

Juan Berenguer: the portly Panamanian with the big fastball

Mother Teresa: the Nobel Peace Prize–winning nun based in India; the diminutive Roman Catholic charity worker

Deng Xiaoping: the diminutive leader; a chain-smoking octagenarian who stands just over five feet

Dalai Lama: Tibet's exiled god-king

Gov. "Big Jim" Folsom: a 6′8″ folk hero who brought paved roads to Alabama

Ivan Boesky: the Wall Street kingpin; the disgraced tycoon; the flamboyant speculator

Malcolm Forbes: the motorcycle enthusiast and flamboyant millionaire

Mikhail Gorbachev: the wily Soviet leader

Mickey Mouse: the popular cartoon rodent

Punxsutawney Phil: the nation's furry forecaster of spring

Canada: America's northern neighbor

Beijing: a sleepy, sprawling giant known best for its few majestic monuments and its millions of minions on bicycles

Persian Gulf: the strategic, oil-rich region

Hong Kong: that fast-paced British colony

Washington: that Western state

Rhinoceros: a lumbering link to prehistory; the Herculean herbivore; one of nature's ugliest animals; the endangered beast

Dinosaurs: the giant lizards

Alligators: the big lizards

Whale: the mammoth mammal

Fish: river denizens

Bloodhounds: floppy-eared sleuths of mournful countenance

Reindeer: the antlered animal

Spy satellite: the giant electronic eavesdropper

U.S. battleship New Jersey: the floating fortress

Aspirin: the ubiquitous white pill

Manhole covers: the ubiquitous metal lids

original of civilized man. Although one cannot postulate that so farsighted an intention lay behind the strictures of the early writers, this conclusion nevertheless prepares the ground for the next phase of the attack on the Hottentot way of life, which comes from British commentators after Britain's takeover of the Cape in 1795. John Barrow writes of indolence as "the principal cause of [the] ruin" of the Hottentots, "a real disease, whose only remedy seems to be that of terror," the remedy of hunger having shown itself to be inadequate. The consensus is that the Hottentot way of life, characterized by low-level subsistence maintained by the minimal resort to wage-labor ("laziness"), wandering in search of greener pastures ("vagrancy"), and a sometimes casual attitude toward private property ("thieving"), will have to be reformed by *discipline* (a key word of the age) if the Hottentot is to have any stake ("pull his weight") in the colony.

To the extent that the discourse recognizes that within the areas settled by colonists a Hottentot tribal life no longer exists and that the only viable future for the Hottentots is within the colonial economy, this attitude can be regarded as hardheaded. But to the extent that it sees "indolence" as part of the Hottentot racial "character," an "original bad quality," which only generations of strict discipline would eradicate ("cut off the root of"), we can accurately call this a racist attitude. It looks on the Hottentot and sees only squalor, disease, and blank torpor, closing its eyes to the possibility that, given a choice between idleness (with accompanying poverty) and the wretchedness of lifelong manual labor, people may deliberately choose the former.

But the true scandal of the nineteenth century was not the idleness of the Hottentots (by now seen as inherent in the race) but the idleness of the Boers. The sliding of farmers into an idle way of life can be traced back to the first decades of settlement. Governor Zacharias Wagenaar wrote to the East India Company in 1663 suggesting that half a dozen of the free farmers ought to be called home because of their "indolence and . . . irregular and debauched lives." A century later François Le Vaillant commented that "from the profound inaction in which [the farmers] live, one would suppose their supreme felicity to consist in doing nothing."

Not only the farmer but the burgher of Cape Town was afflicted with this lapse into sloth. J. C. Stavorinus describes a typical day in the life of a burgher at the end of the eighteenth century: a long smoke and stroll in the morning, an hour or two of business, a midday meal followed by a snooze, an evening of cards—all in all "a very comfortable life."

The harshest remarks of nineteenth-century commentators are, however, reserved for the Boers of the frontier. Seeing sloth as by now part of the "nature" of the Boer, Barrow suggests that the colony will not become productive until this "nature" is changed, or failing that, until the Boers are replaced with more industrious and enterprising settlers.

The refrain is taken up by every traveler who penetrates into the backcountry and encounters farmers living in mean dwellings set on vast tracts, barely literate, rudely clad, surrounded by slaves and servants with too little employment, disdainful of manual labor, content to carry on subsistence farming in a land of potential plenty. Robert Percival comments, "There is I believe in no part of the world an instance to be found of European adventurers so entirely destitute of enterprise, and so completely indifferent to the art of bettering their situation." William Burchell observes that the new immigrant, full of enterprise and energy, swiftly rises to prosperity, but then "adopts the rude manners [of the Afrikaner] he at first despised, and step by step, his life degenerates into mere sensual existence."

The spokesmen of colonialism are dismayed by the squalor and sloth of Boer life because it affords sinister evidence of how European stock can regress after a few generations in Africa. In being content to scratch no more than a bare living from the soil, the Boer seems further to betray the colonizing mission, since in order to justify its conquests colonialism has to demonstrate that the colonist is a better steward of the earth than the native.

But there is a further component to the British response to Boer idleness, a component of moral outrage stemming from the perception that Boer ease is achieved at the expense of the misery of slaves and servants. Thus while disdain for work becomes institutionalized among the masters, the system does not even have the compensation that habits of industry are fostered among the servants—who are frequently found to prefer Boer masters to British because the latter, though they pay more, demand too much work.

The fact that Boer idleness is achieved at the expense of a servile class and therefore differs in a crucial respect from the old Hottentot idleness has the natural consequence that the philosophical question that did not get asked regarding the Hottentots gets asked all the less regarding the Boers, namely: if we ignore the dirty skins, the clouds of flies, the rude clothing, can these frontier farmers not be said to stand for a rejection of the curse of discipline and labor in favor of a prelapsarian African way of life in which the fruits of the earth are enjoyed as they drop

"Fans Shed Light on the Game," by Scott Mutter. Mutter produced this image by combining a daytime photograph of Wrigley Field with a nighttime photograph of the skyline as seen from the stadium. The flashlight beams were airbrushed onto the photo. "Fans Shed Light on the Game" is sold as a poster in Chicago. Mutter lives in Park Ridge, Illinois.

into the hand, work is avoided as a scourge, and idleness and leisure become the same thing? The moral and political outlook of the typical British visitor to the Cape made it unlikely that such a thought would be entertained.

Today we are not likely to be so censorious of the idleness of the Hottentots (the Boers present a somewhat different case). We have a century of anthropological and historical discipline behind us to make us wary of observing the lives of foreign peoples too cursorily and from too self-centered a viewpoint. Given a chance to visit the seventeenth-century Cape, we might reasonably expect to see features of Hottentot life that eluded seventeenth-century observers. We might be more sensitive to seasonal variations in activity and to the rhythm of the Hottentot "week." We might be more hesitant about calling an entire people lazy on the grounds that the men lie around while the women are busy (a fact that several early travelers noted). We might pay less attention to hunting and fishing and ways of dressing flesh—an area where taboos tend to clash—and more to the gathering activities of women and children. We might be more cautious of taking those Hottentots on the fringes of Dutch settlement as typical of all Hottentots. With our wider historical perspective, we might also appreciate better what a massive cultural revolution is entailed when a people moves from a subsistence economy to an economy of providence, from pastoralism to agriculture—a move, indeed, in which the notion of *work* may be said to make its appearance in history.

Yet in the very open-mindedness we might like to imagine extending toward the Hottentot from our modern science of Man lies the germ of an insidious betrayal of the Hottentot. For the modern science of Man has at its foundation a will to see a culture *at work* in a society. If the Hottentot did not absorb the ideology of work in a generation, we cannot expect the Western bourgeois to shed his allegiance to it in a day. It would be particularly rash to expect that the modern writer would respond more generously than his ancestors to a way of life so thoroughly indolent that it presented him with nothing to say. The temptation to say that there is something *at work* when there is nothing is always strong. The challenge that idleness poses to work, its power to scandalize, is as radical today as it ever was.

The history of idleness in South Africa is not a side issue or a curiosity. One need only look at the face of South African labor in the twentieth century to confirm this. The idleness of the Boer is still there in taboos on certain grades

of manual work (*hotnotswerk, kafferwerk*), as well as in rituals of leisure indistinguishable from idleness (sitting on the porch, lying on the beach). The idleness of the native is still present in a tradition of overemployment and underpayment, maintained from both sides of the fence, in which two men are hired to do one man's work, each working half the time and standing idle half the time, each getting half of one man's wage. The luxurious idleness of the settler is still denounced from Europe, the idleness of the native still deplored by his master. I hope that it is clear that I by no means add my voice to the chorus of moralizing disapproval. On the contrary, I hope that I have opened a way to the reading of idleness since 1652 as an authentically native response to a foreign way of life, a response that has rarely been defended in writing but that has exerted a powerful attraction since the days when commentators began to shake their heads over Europeans who, from too much intercourse with Hottentots, were sinking into a life of sloth. It is a measure of how powerful this attraction has remained that, after 1948, the authorities embarked—and, to the extent that they were responding to social realities, found themselves compelled to embark—on a program of laws to reform South African society. Two cornerstone measures of this program were the so-called Immorality Act and Mixed Marriages Act, laws whose primary intention and whose practical effect was to take away from white men the freedom to drop out of the ranks of the laboring class, take up with brown women, settle down to more or less idle, shiftless, improvident lives, and engender troops of ragged children of all hues, a process which, if allowed to accelerate, would in the end, they foresaw, spell the demise of white Christian civilization at the tip of Africa.

[Talk]

WARHOL'S MORTAL LEGACY

From remarks made by Arthur Danto at a panel on Andy Warhol held at the Whitney Museum in New York on December 6, 1987. Danto is Johnsonian Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University.

One day in the late sixties or early seventies, at the time when revolutionary fever at my university was acute and students were certain they had entered into a new realm of being, word went out that there was to be a showing of Howdy Doody films in the student center. It is hard to imagine a stranger sight, in a time when there were many strange sights, than all those women, with long hair and kitten faces, in jeans and pea jackets (a type that vanished as abruptly as it appeared), and all those bearded young men in boots and plaid shirts, wearing armbands and incendiary buttons like battle ribbons, sitting on the floor and singing together the innocuous songs of Howdy Doody. It was clear to me that these grainy images of a freckled fool in a bandanna bonded them in a way that excluded me, whatever sympathies for them I might feel. They had spent some important part of their childhoods watching Howdy Doody in the laps of their pre-feminist mommies, wearing Dr. Denton's and drinking their bedtime cocoa before the black-and-white screen. Howdy Doody played no role in my life, and so there was no way for me to share in a complex of thought and feeling that helped form the basis of their oneness as a generation.

Some years later, when I encountered Howdy Doody again as one of a set of prints—Andy Warhol's *Mythologies*—at a legendary opening at the Feldman Gallery on Mercer Street, I understood something of Warhol's artistic achievement. He brought to a level of consciousness the images that defined us as a single mind. The images he made, whether of Marilyn or Liz or Elvis or Jackie, were our mythologies. Warhol often iterated these images in a kind of visual chant ("Jackie! Jackie! Jackie! Jackie!") as if to emphasize that they *are* images, for the personages themselves are of course irrelevantly unique.

These images are in fact icons, as if of holy beings; for those in whose lives they figure, they condense a complex of submerged feelings, as Howdy Doody did for those fierce and tender students. I think Warhol's primary legacy as an artist lies there, in his ability to hold these images up like a mirror to our mind—which is, after all, an ancient and profound office of art. Beside him, there were none who accomplished this with such absolute truth and power, and with such uncanny accuracy.

According to the ordinary pieties, an artist's legacy is thought to lie in the timeless works of art left behind for the perpetual edification of generation after generation. In my view, Warhol's legacy is a limited one, and his power will last only as long as the images themselves retain their power. There are three stages in the life of such images. The first is the stage when the image is part of the common mind—simply to contemplate it is to feel whatever the image means. The second stage is reached when the image loses its power to evoke feelings, yet remains immediately familiar: we don't have to ask what or whose image it is. In the last stage,

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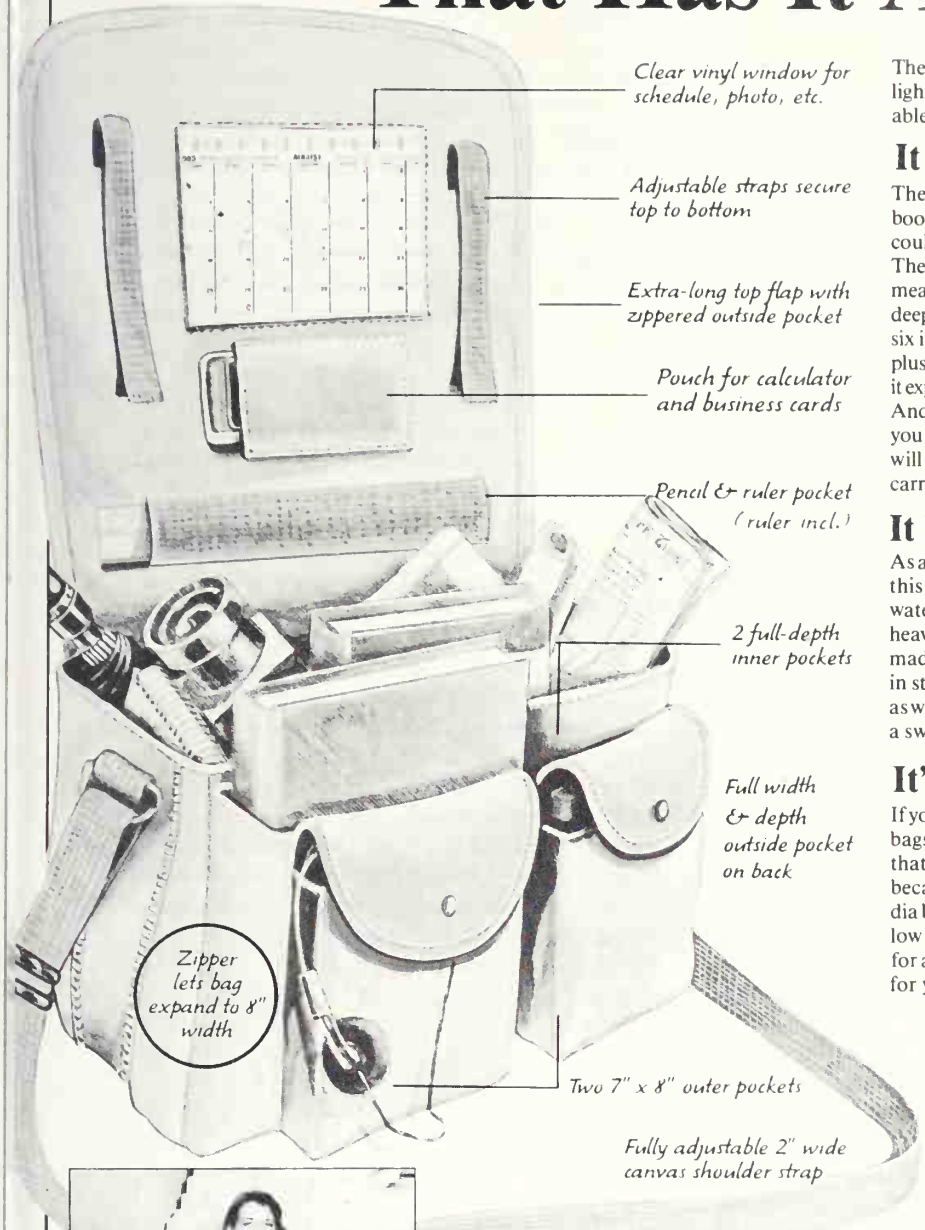
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[Tenets]

THE CHURCH OF THE SECULAR HUMANIST

From "Tenets of Secular Humanism," Article IX of the bylaws of the Church of American Secular Humanism, Inc., established in Alabama by Mr. and Mrs. Frank Zappa. The Zappas organized the church last August after a federal judge ruled that secular humanism was a religion and therefore could not be taught in the Alabama public schools. The church was dissolved after the decision was reversed.

Secular Humanism is a religion adhering to the following basic tenets and beliefs:

That man's collective purpose is to seek the good life by the increase of every person's freedom and potential personal development.

That there is no spiritual or supernatural origin for morals.

That there is no transcendent or supernatural reality.

That man is the center of the universe and all existence and will act and be treated accordingly unless evidence to the contrary is discovered through verifiable scientific inquiry.

That each man obey the secular laws, ordinances, and regulations to which he is subject, after which he is responsible only to himself in the determination of whether his decisions are right or wrong.

That common sense, unfettered by preconceptions of the supernatural, shall be a goal to be developed among all people.

That men have invented gods, and may continue to do so, utilizing these inventions for personal benefit.

That moral choices are purely personal and can only be based on an autonomous, undiscovered, and unfulfilled inner self.

That man is the product of evolutionary and physical forces. He is purely biological and has no supernatural or transcendent spiritual component or quality.

That the Church of American Secular Humanism is the One True Church.

even this is no longer true, and a special cognitive effort must be made to identify the image as to content. I suppose that with most of the images of the saints, we are in that third situation, as we are with the images of most of the presidents—who but an archivist can tell Ulysses S. Grant from James G. Blaine? Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt, even Kennedy, are in the second stage. For those for whom Howdy Doody was a charged image, so, I think, were Nixon and Johnson.

"Isn't life a series of images that change as they repeat themselves?" Warhol once wrote. To the extent that our life is the life of our images, then these three stages define important boundaries of the social self.

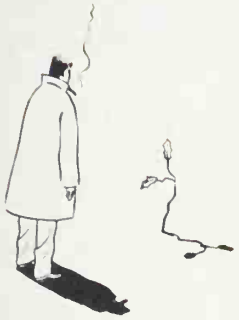
The repetition and, in a sense, the banality of his greatest images define their force. The Campbell's Soup can represents what Warhol himself brought for lunch every day for over twenty years, and had to connote warmth, predictability, security, and pleasure. He had a political philosophy in connection with such things. A Coke or a hot dog was the same whatever one's wealth or status in society. You could not buy a better hot dog or have to settle for a worse Coke no matter who you were. His images—our images—have that kind of egalitarian character: they are altogether public and yet they define us from within. It was in this spirit of benign egalitarianism that Warhol thought each of us has a right to a full fifteen minutes of fame. Whatever the case, Warhol's legacy is bound up with the ephemerality—the essential mortality—of the mind to which he gave objective embodiment, and through which we could learn what, after all, we were.

[Testimonial]

TANGLED UP IN BOB

Bruce Springsteen delivered these remarks at the annual Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction dinner held in New York City in January. Bob Dylan was among those inducted.

The first time I heard Bob Dylan, I was in the car with my mother listening to WMCA, and on came that snare shot that sounded like somebody'd kicked open the door to your mind: "Like a Rolling Stone." My mother—she was no stiff with rock 'n' roll, she liked the music—sat there for a minute, then looked at me and said, "That guy can't sing." But I knew she was wrong. I sat there and I didn't say nothin', but I



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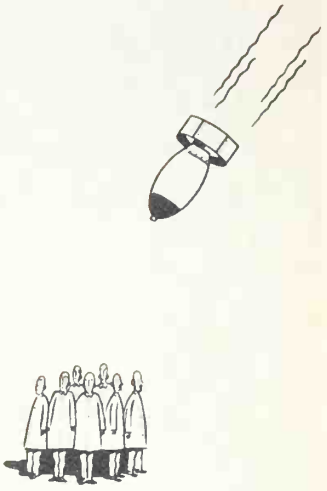


BOMBARD A DRAB MOB

From Madam I'm Adam and Other Palindromes, *written by William Irvine and illustrated by Steven Guarnaccia. Published by Scribner's.*

knew that I was listening to the toughest voice that I had ever heard. It was lean and it sounded somehow simultaneously young and adult.

I ran out and bought the single and ran home and played it, but they must have made a mistake in the factory because a Lenny Welch song came on. The label was wrong. So I ran back to the store, got the Dylan, and came back and played it. Then I went out and got "Highway 61." That was all I played for weeks, looking at the cover with Bob in that satin blue jacket and the Triumph motorcycle shirt.

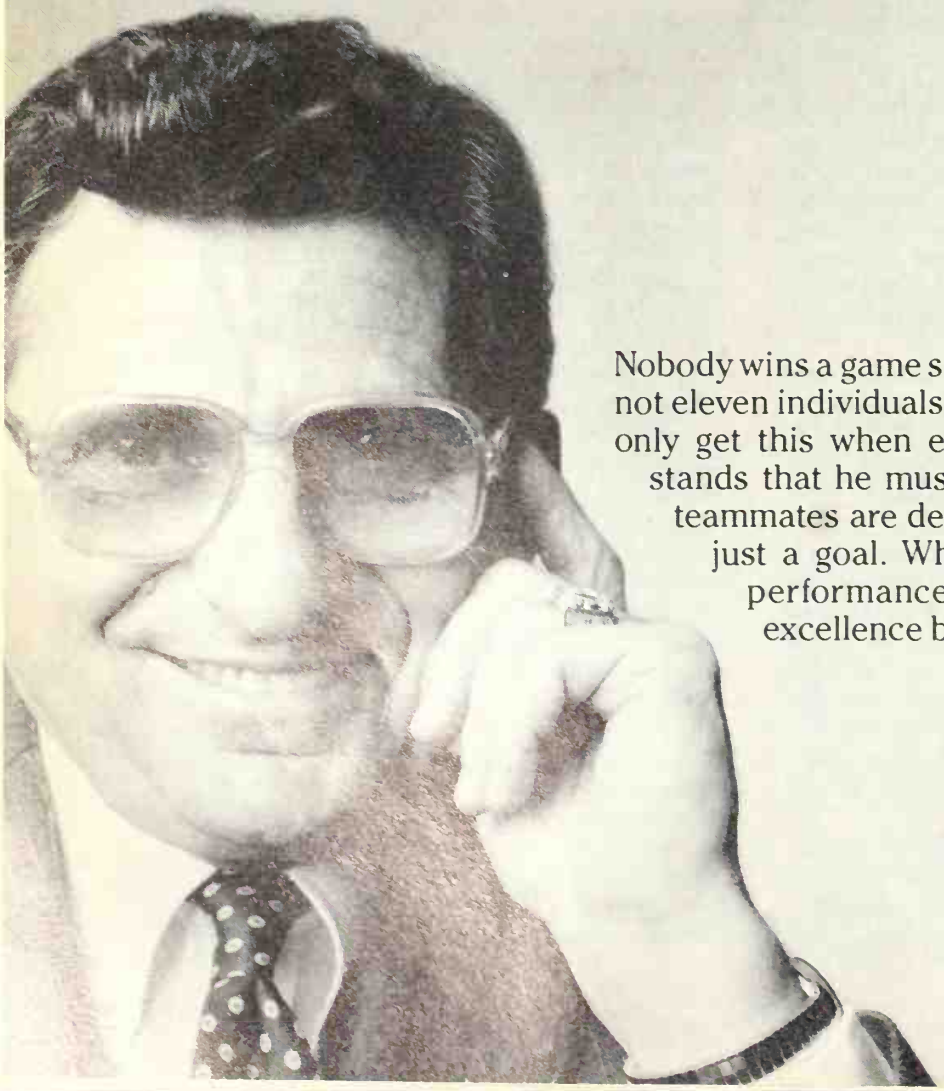
When I was a kid, Bob's voice somehow thrilled and scared me, it made me feel kind of irresponsibly innocent—it still does—when it reached down and touched what little worldliness a fifteen-year-old high-school kid in New Jersey had in him at the time. Dylan was a revolutionary. Bob freed your mind the way Elvis freed your body. He showed us that just because the music was innately physical did not mean that it was anti-intellectual. He had the vision and the talent to make a pop song that contained the whole world. He invented a new way a pop singer could sound, broke through the limitations of what a recording artist could achieve, and changed the face of rock 'n' roll forever.

Without Bob the Beatles wouldn't have made "Sgt. Pepper," the Beach Boys wouldn't have made "Pet Sounds," the Sex Pistols wouldn't have made "God Save the Queen," U2 wouldn't have done "Pride in the Name of Love," Marvin Gaye wouldn't have done "What's Goin' On?," the Count Five would not have done "Psychotic Reaction," Grandmaster Flash might not have done "The Message," and there never would have been a group named the Electric Prunes. To this day, wherever great rock music is being made, there is the shadow of Bob Dylan. Bob's own modern work has gone unjustly underappreciated because it's had to stand in that shadow. If there was a young guy out there writing the "Empire Burlesque" album, writing "Every Grain of Sand," they'd be calling him the new Bob Dylan.

About three months ago, I was watching the *Rolling Stones Special* on TV. Bob came on and he was in a real cranky mood. He was kind of bitchin' and moanin' about how his fans come up to him on the street and treat him like a long lost brother or something, even though they don't know him. Now speaking as a fan, when I was fifteen and I heard "Like a Rolling Stone," I heard a guy who had the guts to take on the whole world and who made me feel like I had to too. Maybe some people misunderstood that voice as saying that somehow Bob was going to do the job for them, but as we grow older, we learn that there isn't anybody out there who can do that job for anybody else. So I'm just here tonight to say thanks, to say that I wouldn't be here without you, to say that there isn't a soul in this room who does not owe you his thanks, and

"Self-confidenc
Confidence i

Joe Paterno
Head Football Coach
Penn State University



Nobody wins a game single-handedly. A football team is not eleven individuals, it's a synchronized unit. You can only get this when every man on the squad understands that he must perform his best, because his teammates are depending on him. Excellence isn't just a goal. When a team outgrows individual performance and learns team confidence, excellence becomes a reality.

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William A. Schreyer
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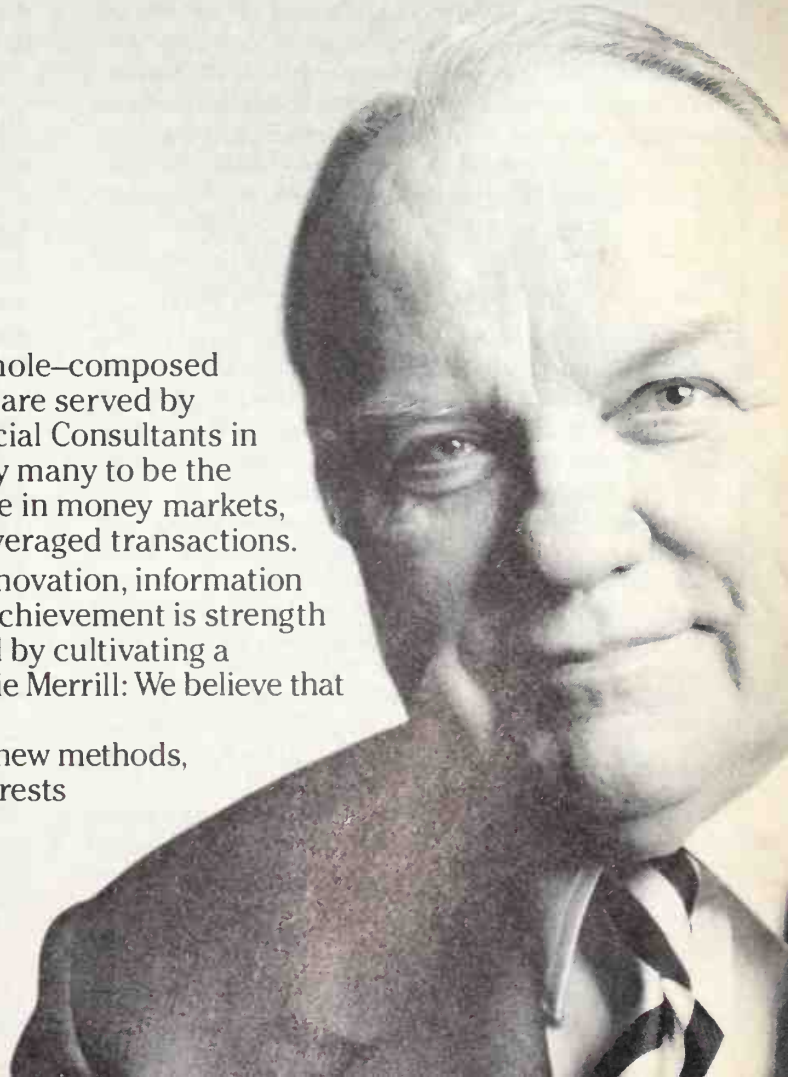

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to steal a line from one of your songs—whether you like it or not—"You was the brother that I never had."

[Memoir]

MEETING ZAPPA

From Perfect Pitch: A Life Story, *by Nicolas Slonimsky, published in March by Oxford University Press. Slonimsky, who was born in St. Petersburg in 1894, is a pianist, composer, musicologist, and conductor.*

One late Saturday evening in the spring of 1981, I received a telephone call. "Nicolas Slonimsky?" (correctly pronounced) the caller inquired. "This is Frank Zappa. I never realized you were in Los Angeles, and I want so much to get in touch with you about your book of scales." I was startled. Frank Zappa was the last person who, to my mind, could be interested in my theoretico-musical inventions. His name was familiar to me from a promotional album jacket showing him seated on the john with his denuded left thigh in view, and the legend in large letters: PHI KRAPPA ZAPPA.

We arranged to meet on the following Monday at 2:30 in the afternoon, and at the appointed time on the appointed day his assistant knocked at my door. I stepped out of my apartment and beheld something that looked like a space shuttle—a black Mercedes taking up almost half a block of Wilshire Boulevard. I could not refrain from asking the driver how much such a machine cost. "Sixty," he replied.

It took us nearly an hour to get to Zappa's place in the hills of Hollywood. Zappa met me at the door. He looked like a leading man in the movies—tall, slender, sporting a small Italian mustache. For starters, I asked him the origin of his last name; he replied it meant "the plough" in Italian.

Zappa's wife came in, an ample young woman, and served coffee and tea. Zappa told me he did not drink alcoholic beverages; contrary to the legendary habits of most rock-and-roll musicians, he never partook of drugs. But he smoked cigarettes incessantly, tobacco being his only, and quite venial, sin. Zappa led me to his studio, which housed a huge Bosendorfer piano. I asked him how much he paid for this keyboard monster. "Seventy," he replied.

Zappa declared himself an admirer of Varèse and said he had been composing orchestral works according to Varèse's principles of composition, with unrelated themes following in free succession. To substantiate this claim, he brought out three scores, in manuscript and each measuring 13 x 20 inches, beautifully copied and handsomely bound. Indeed, the configurations of notes and contrapuntal combinations looked remarkably Varèsian. Yet he never went to music school, and had learned the technique of composition from the study of actual editions. He had a contract with an orchestra in Holland to play one of his works, but they had demanded a piece from his recording royalties on top of the regular fee. "I offered them a quarter," Zappa said, "if they would put up a quarter." It took me some time to figure out that the fractions he used referred to millions of dollars.

Zappa's teenage daughter flitted in, introduced by Mrs. Zappa as Moon Unit. She did not seem to be embarrassed by this esoteric appellation. A year or two later she became a celebrity in her own right by making a record with her father's band in which she carried on a telephone conversation in a California language known as Valley Girl Talk. The valley in question was the San Fernando, nestled north of Los Angeles and populated by a gaggle of young boys and girls, but mostly girls, who seemed to exude a special joie de vivre.

Zappa invited me to try out his Bösendorfer. I sat down at the keyboard and played the coronation scene from *Boris Godunov*, which requires deep bass sounds. Zappa was impressed by these Russian harmonies. He asked me to play some of my own compositions, and I launched into the last piece in my *Minitudes*, based on an interplay of mutually exclusive triads and covering the entire piano keyboard. "Why don't you play this piece at my next concert?" Zappa asked. "When will that be?" I replied. "Tomorrow. We can rehearse in the afternoon." I was somewhat taken aback at the sudden offer, but after all, I had nothing to lose. So I decided to take my chance as a soloist at a rock concert.

The next day I arrived at the large coliseum in Santa Monica where Zappa's concert was to take place. A huge, towering man led me to Zappa's room. "Mr. Zappa is expecting you," he said, after satisfying himself as to my identity. He was Zappa's bodyguard, hired after Zappa had been attacked during a concert by a besotted admirer.

On the stage during the rehearsal, I sat at the electric piano and played my piece. For better effect, I added sixteen bars to the coda, ending in repeated alternation of C major and F-sharp major chords in the highest treble and lowest bass registers. Zappa dictated to his players the principal tonalities of my piece, and they picked up the modulations with extraordinary assurance. I had never played the electric piano before, but I adjusted to it without much trouble.

The hall began to fill rapidly. Zappa's body-

The End of the Reagan/Bakker/Falwell Era & the Future of Religion

In bygone days, as the Reagan "revolution" and the Christian New Right seemed to sweep all before them, we at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW (an ecumenical monthly edited by lay Catholics) were urged to abandon our independent stance and throw in with the Wave of the Future. We didn't. As circulation took a downturn, we felt like pariahs. But then, popularity isn't everything and we've always been allergic to ideological stampedes. Now that the Conservative Bulldozer, which in Orwellian fashion would defend democracy by destroying it, has run into the ditch, and New Right TV preachers have had their financial shenanigans and moral squalor revealed, we admittedly feel vindicated.

However, the Religious Right will — after licking its wounds — surely be back to strut and bully again, for its power-lust abides. Armed with the bizarre ideology that America is God's Chosen Nation, it still asserts that so-called born-again Christians must "take power" and "run our own country." It's the old Constantinian, theocratic compulsion.

But Jesus didn't promise power and security to his followers. To the contrary, he offered hardship and danger: "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. . . ." The Caesaropapist quest for power is not only alien to America's best traditions, but inimical to authentic Christianity. As Kierkegaard said, "Verily there is that which is more contrary to . . . the very nature of Christianity than any heresy, any schism . . . and that is to *play* Christianity. But precisely in the very same sense that the child plays soldier, it is playing Christianity to take away the danger (Christianly, 'witness' and 'danger' correspond), and in place of this to introduce power (to be a danger for others), worldly goods, advantages, luxurious enjoyment of the most exquisite refinements. . . ."

America's Ayatollah-style Christianity would equate God's cause with a superpatriotic crusade against "Communism," such that one famous New Right preacher hailed the U.S.-sponsored Contra mercenaries as "God's Army." But this is just "playing" Christianity.

Not only is the identification of the faith with American Might idolatrous and self-serving, but it perpetuates the centuries-long scandal of Christendom: Christians blessing privilege and cozying up to Caesar while the world's poor — those the itinerant Jesus loved most — are malignly neglected.

Christians are now at a historical crossroad. We believe it's time to put "Shi' ite" Christianity behind us and return to our Father's business — witnessing to the Gospel, tending to the "least brethren," doing justice, making peace, and loving our neighbors as ourselves. Those who write for us include diverse people like Robert N. Bellah, Walker Percy, Christopher Lasch, J.M. Cameron, Henri J.M. Nouwen, Norman Lear, John Lukacs, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Richard J. Mouw, and Robert Coles.

Newsweek calls us "thoughtful and often cheeky." We bat around the full range of theological, ethical, and social issues, and defy easy pigeonholing. If you're "grossed out" by superficial, saccharine, and self-aggrandizing religion, and are looking for a "face" of Christianity that is spiritually tough, intellectually sharp, and socially responsible, subscribe to the NEW OXFORD REVIEW today!

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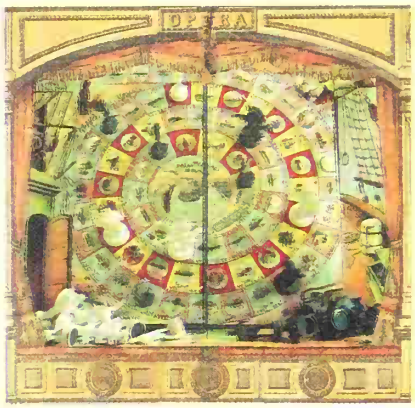

The Ideas embarked upon
a Journey

and one day set foot upon
an exotic Island,

where they came upon
fantastic Creatures

and strange
botanical Species.

They stumbled upon dark Altars
hinting of strange Rites

and mysterious Ceremonies
performed by masked Maidens.

From The Teapot Opera, *written and photographed by Arthur Tress. The Teapot Opera is a "visual epic" about "the birth of an idea and its journey toward artistic fruition." It will be published next month by Abbeville.*

guard gave me earplugs for, when Zappa's band went into action, the decibels were extremely high. Zappa sang and danced while conducting with a professional verve that astounded me. A soprano soloist came out and sang a ballad about being a hooker, using a variety of obscenities. Then came my turn. Balancing a cigarette between his lips, Zappa introduced me to the audience as "our national treasure." I pulled out the earplugs and sat down at the electric piano. With demoniac energy Zappa launched us into my piece. To my surprise I sensed a growing consanguinity with my youthful audience as I played. My fortissimo ending brought screams and whistles the likes of which I had never imagined possible. Dancing Zappa, wild audience, and befuddled me—I felt like an intruder in a mad scene from *Alice in Wonderland*. I had entered my Age of Absurdity.

[Newspaper Column]

THERE GOES ZANE

From "The Truth About Zane Grey," by Ray Ring, in the November 11, 1987, issue of New Times, *a weekly newspaper published in Phoenix, Arizona. Ring writes a column for the paper called "Boondocks." His first novel,* Telluride Smile, *was published in March by Dodd, Mead.*

This is the story of how the great Zane Grey doesn't even deserve to have an elementary school named after him.

It's a surprising story, because Zane Grey has been held up as one of the most prominent and accomplished Arizonans ever—which may say as much about Arizona as it does about the man.

His accomplishment was pulp fiction, romantic Westerns mostly. Before he died in 1939, he wrote eighty-nine books, including *Code of the West* and *To the Last Man* and the classic *Riders of the Purple Sage*. While no deeper than a sunburn, his books are vivid, creaking with saddle leather and reeking with sagebrush perfume.

Payson has always been Zane Grey's home country in Arizona, where he was best known and, you'd expect, best loved. So shock waves went out a few weeks ago when folks in Payson snubbed the legendary Zane Grey. The local school board decided, on a five-to-nothing vote, not to put his name on the new elementary school.

Publicly, those involved trot out soothing reasons, like it was only logical to name the school after the town, and think of the substantial savings from using the same name the old school has had for years, because no new stationery would have to be printed up.

But behind all the logical reasons are unpleasant memories of Zane Grey that still linger among the older families of Payson. They know the downside of Zane Grey: he was an outsider, born in Ohio, educated in Pennsylvania, one-time resident of New York. Then he settled in California. That about sums it up.

The guy was a dentist. A dentist, for God's sake. And then an author—a runty one who made all the heroes in his books way over six feet tall. That tells you something.

By the time he got to Arizona, Zane Grey was vain. He was world-class rich and insufferably arrogant. He'd cruise through in a black limo with vanity plates. The front plate announced HERE COMES ZANE GREY. The rear plate said THERE GOES ZANE GREY.

On his lavish hunting expeditions, he'd take along a bathtub and mountains of goods to keep him comfortable, and a couple dozen cooks, wranglers, guides, and "secretaries" or "nieces" who were his concubines of the month. Because despite the ideals of virtue presented in his books, Zane Grey proliferously cheated on his wife, Dolly, and lived about as simply as a sultan.

Zane Grey was a hypocrite, nothing like the heroes in his books. He'd wax on about "my beloved Arizona." But for years he figured he was above the law when it came to hunting here.

"I never did have a very good opinion of him," says Mae Haught, eighty-seven, and a member of the pioneer family that sold Zane Grey his land, built his cabin, and guided him on hunts. In a telling incident in 1930, Zane Grey blew his top when he was denied permission to go on a bear hunt a few weeks before the season opened. He appealed to the governor and got turned down. He couldn't wait, you see, because he was leaving on another of his around-the-world trips. He left Arizona in a huff and vowed he'd never return. People around Payson back then thought, fine. Some of them still think the same way.

[Jacket Copy]

BUT ENOUGH ABOUT YOU

From the book jacket of Gordon Lish's new collection of stories, Mourner at the Door, *published this month by Viking. According to sources at Viking, the copy was written by Lish.*

What accounts for the extraordinary controversy that has centered on the activities of Gordon Lish must surely have chiefly to do with the number and vehemence of those activities—for it is a certainty that, despite Lish's reclusive habits, there is no other contemporary figure in the nation's literary community whose presence is as widely or as urgently felt. Given Lish's often subversive and always inventive exertions as a teacher, as an editor, as a publisher, as a writer, his influence has become something to reckon with—and it is altogether expectable that some would see such a deal of influence as something to denounce as well. Nowhere has the assault on Lish been more vigorously marshaled than with relation to his own fiction—for it is in this context that Lish is most public and most bent on placing himself at risk. His novels *Dear Mr. Capote* and *Peru,* and *What I Know So Far,* Lish's first volume of stories, proved unapologetic and unforgiving in the violence and astringency of their struggle against conventional effects and forms. Such critics as Kenneth Burke and Harold Bloom and Richard Poirier have been hospitable to Lish's intentions; others have shown themselves to be either baffled or downright hostile. Now, with the publication of this second collection of stories, the debate over Gordon Lish's work will doubtlessly collect new heat . . . But whatever judgment the reader takes away with him from his experience with *Mourner at the Door,* no reader will go away from these pages unshaken by the force of their sentences, nor will any reader not know why it is that Gordon Lish has so powerfully and indelibly entered the literary history of this century.

[Sentence]

OBSERVING THE OBSERVER

From The Assignment, *by Friedrich Dürrenmatt, published by Random House. Each of the novel's twenty-four chapters consists of a single sentence. Dürrenmatt is Swiss. Translated by Joel Agee.*

A problem had been troubling him, D., for a long time, a logical problem loosely involving a mirror telescope he had installed in his house in the mountains, an unwieldy thing that he occasionally pointed at a cliff from which he was being observed by people with field glasses, with the effect that, as soon as the people observing him through their field glasses realized that he was observing them through his telescope, they would retreat in a hurry, an empirical confirmation, in short, of the logical conclusion that anything observed requires the presence of an observer, who, if he is observed by what he is observing, himself becomes an object of observation, a banal logical interaction, which, however, transposed into reality, had a destabilizing effect, for the people observing him and discovering that he was observing them through a mirror telescope felt caught in the act, and since being caught in the act produces embarrassment and embarrassment frequently leads to aggression, more than one of these people, after retreating in haste, had come back to throw rocks at his house as soon as he had dismantled the telescope, a dialectical process, said D., that was symptomatic of our time, when everyone observed and felt observed by everyone else, so that a very suitable definition of contemporary man might be that he is man under observation—observed by the state, for one, with more and more sophisticated methods, while man makes more and more desperate attempts to escape being observed, which in turn renders man increasingly suspect in the eyes of the state and the state even more suspect in the eyes of man; similarly each state observes and feels observed by all the other states, and man, on another plane, is busy observing nature as never before, inventing more and more subtle instruments for this purpose—cameras, telescopes, stereoscopes, radio telescopes, X-ray telescopes, microscopes, synchrotrons, satellites, space probes, computers—all designed to coax more and more new observations out of nature, from quasars millions of light-years away to particles a billionth of a millimeter in diameter to the discovery that electromagnetic rays are nothing but radiant mass and mass is frozen electromagnetic radiation; never before had man observed nature so closely that she stood virtually naked before him, yes, denuded of all her secrets, exploited, her resources squandered, which was why it occasionally seemed to him, D., that nature, for her part, was observing man and becoming aggressive, for what was the pollution of air, earth, and water, what were the dying forests, but a strike, a deliberate refusal to neutralize the poisons, while the new viruses, earthquakes, droughts, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, et cetera, were precisely aimed defensive measures of observed nature against her observer, much the way D.'s mirror telescope and the rocks that were thrown at his house were measures taken against being observed, but, he added, after suddenly bursting into laughter and becoming serious again, what he was constructing here was of course only one of two possibilities, the other one being the precise opposite of what he had described, for a logical conclusion always depends on the initial situation: if, in his house in the mountains, he was being observed less and less, so rarely that, when he pointed his mirror telescope at people who he presumed were observing him from the cliff, they turned out to be observing not him but something else through their field glasses, chamois or mountain climbers or whatnot, this state of not being observed would begin to torment him after a while, much more than the knowledge of being observed had bothered him earlier, so that he would virtually yearn for those rocks to be thrown at his house, because not being watched would make him feel not worth noticing, not being worth noticing would make him feel disrespected, being disrespected would make him feel insignificant, being insignificant would make him feel meaningless, and, he imagined, the end result might be a hopeless depression, in fact he might even give up his unsuccessful academic career as meaningless, and would have to conclude that other people suffered as much from not being observed as he did, that they, too, felt meaningless unless they were being observed, and that this was the reason why they all observed and took snapshots and movies of each other, for fear of experiencing the meaninglessness of their existence in the face of a dispersing universe with billions of Milky Ways like our own, settled with countless life-bearing but hopelessly remote and therefore isolated planets like our own, a cosmos filled with incessant pulsations of exploding and collapsing suns, leaving no one, except man himself, to pay any attention to man and thereby lend him meaning, for a personal god was no longer possible in the face of such a monstrosity as this universe, a god as world regent and father who keeps an eye on everyone, who counts the hairs on every head, this god was dead because

Q: Why can't this veal calf walk?

A: He has only two feet.

Actually, less than two feet. Twenty two inches to be exact. His entire life is spent chained in a wooden box measuring only 22 inches wide and 56 inches long. The box is so small that the calf can't walk or even turn around.

Most people think animal abuse is illegal. It isn't. In veal factories, it's business as usual. "Milk-fed" veal is obtained by making a calf anemic. The calf is *not* fed mother's milk. He's fed an antibiotic laced formula that causes severe diarrhea. He must lie in his own excrement—choking on the ammonia gases. He's chained in a darkened building with hundreds of other baby calves suffering the same fate. They are immobilized, sick, and anemic.

Toxic Veal

The reckless use of oxytetracycline, mold inhibiting chemicals, chloramphenicol, neomycin, penicillin, and other drugs is not just bad for calves. It is toxic to you.

Chloramphenicol has caused fatal bone marrow disease in people, but illicit use in factory farm animals continues. USDA warns that "detection is extremely difficult."

Antibiotics in veal and other factory farm products create virulent strains of bacteria that wreak havoc on human health. *Salmonella* poisoning is reaching epidemic proportions.

Veal factories maximize profits for agribusiness drug companies because they are a breeding ground for disease. To keep calves alive under such torturous conditions, they are *continually* given drugs which are passed on to consumers.

It doesn't have to be this way. And with your help, it won't be. Please, don't buy veal!

Campaign Against Factory Farming

YES! Factory farms must be stopped from misusing drugs, abusing farm animals, and destroying America's family farms. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

☐ $20 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $500 ☐ Other_____

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A free Consumer Alert pack is available upon request.

THE HUMANE FARMING ASSOCIATION

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he had become inconceivable, an axiom of faith without any roots in human understanding, only an impersonal god was still conceivable as an abstract principle, as a philosophical-literary construct with which to magically smuggle some kind of meaning into the monstrous whole, vague and vaporous, feeling is all, the name nothing but sound and fury, nebulous glow of heaven locked in the porcelain stove of the heart, but the intellect too, he said, was incapable of coming up with a persuasive illusion of meaning outside of man, for everything that could be thought or done, logic, metaphysics, mathematics, natural law, art, music, poetry, was given its meaning by man, and without man, it sank back into the realm of the unimagined and unconceived and hence into meaninglessness, and a great deal of what was happening today became understandable if one pursued this line of reasoning, man was staggering along in the mad hope of somehow finding someone to be observed by, somewhere, by conducting an arms race, for instance, for of course the powers engaged in an arms race were forced to observe one another, which was why they basically hoped to be able to keep up the arms race forever, so that they would have to observe one another forever, since without an arms race, the contending powers would sink into insignificance, but if by some mishap the arms race should set off the nuclear fireworks, which it had been quite capable of accomplishing for some time, it would represent nothing more than a meaningless manifestation of the fact that the earth had once been inhabited, a fireworks without anyone to observe it, unless it were some kind of humanity or similar life-form somewhere near Sirius or elsewhere, without any chance of communicating to the one who so badly desired to be observed (since he would no longer exist) that, in fact, he *had* been observed, and even the religious and political fundamentalism that was breaking out or persisting wherever one looked was an indication that many, indeed most, people could not stand themselves if they were not observed by someone, and would flee either into the fantasy of a personal god or into an equally metaphysically conceived political party—except for the terrorists, their case was a bit more complex, their goal being not an observed but an unobserved child's paradise, but because they experienced the world in which they lived as a prison where they were not only unjustly locked up but were left unattended and unobserved in one of the dungeons, they desperately sought to force themselves on the attention of their guards and thus step out of their unobserved confinement into the limelight of public notice, which, however, they could achieve only by, paradoxically, drawing back into unobserved obscurity again and again, from the dungeon into the dungeon, unable, ever, to come out and be free, in short, humanity was about to return to its swaddling clothes, fundamentalists, idealists, moralists, and political Christers were doing their utmost to saddle unobserved humanity with the blessings of being observed, and therefore with meaning, for man, in the final analysis, was a pedant who couldn't get by without meaning and was therefore willing to put up with anything except the freedom to not give a damn about meaning . . .

[Story]

CALL ME MOBY

"Captain Ahab: A Novel by the White Whale," by Paul West, in the Winter 1987 Paris Review. *A collection of West's stories,* The Universe, and Other Fictions, *will be published this month.*

I too, alone, survived to tell thee. A whale tells this, white as Biscay froth, a tale black as caviar. I almost lost heart. Albinos do, doomed special while feeling like the rest. We're dark unto ourselves. *We?* I am the only one. I have never bred. I have never seen a white male or a white mate. I never had company save for him. Only, during brief heaven, a mother who nudged and nourished. Shunned, I go from ocean to ocean, falling in love with icebergs and fluffy fog and, nearer shore, with snow and polar bears. I am forbidden nothing, but there is nothing I can have. What sex am I? Did Ahab know?

Squinting aft, I see him, rib cage and all. As the years went by, he began to rattle, then to chime. I read his last will and testament from his lips, then took him down for the count, poor piscuniak of a mariner. Then I whale-hummed at him, just to be friendly. I wanted somehow to swing him loose, then pop him down, minnow-small and feather-frail. Install him on the bulby mound of one vast kidney according to Jonah law. A pet, a familiar, a love.

But dislodge him I could not, and I soon knew his coming for what it was: a test in the form of a sign, a sign in the form of a test. Could I brook his presence without wanting friendship? Ahab was my birthmark. Yes. "Ishmael, art thou sleeping there below?" Then answer would come: "Moby, I am thine, forever."

It was all hopeless. Call me, I began, but my still-thundering jelly of a heart floated upward through my mouth, jump-a-thump, and all that's left is an unfolded compass rose, miming its thanks, murmuring a dew. ■

STRANGER THAN FICTION!

The triumph of style over substance, the hallmark of the Reagan era, is also this decade's legacy to the arts. What literary archaeologists might call the "story" lies buried beneath a profusion of spectacle: the multimillion-dollar computerized effects of cinema, the lurid video novels of writers barely old enough to vote, the garish *son et lumière* of Broadway extravaganzas.

Against this bias for aesthetic splendor, the simple unadorned tale is making a comeback—from storytelling festivals in the South, to stand-up routines on cable television, to performance-art monologues. The monologuists owe their popularity in part to President Reagan himself. After the scaffolding of government support was dismantled in the early 1980s, many of the avant-garde troupes withered. In their place came streamlined, no-frills theater: one-man and one-woman shows.

The curious voices that emerged—often autobiographical, sometimes glib, usually weird—have become a staple of the underfunded arts parlors of the big cities. *Harper's Magazine* recently visited bohemia to gather an anthology of this work. The following monologues were performed at La Mama theater in New York City on March 15, 1988.

KIMBERLY FLYNN *has performed her one-woman shows at several New York City theaters, including Dixon Place, La Mama, and WOW. She will be starring in a contemporary film adaptation of Euripides'* The Bacchae *to be released later this year.*

BEAUTY-SCHOOL BLUES

Check it out. It's just a few months ago I decided to go back to school. So I chose beauty school. I thought, I'll get in, no problem. I'm beautiful. But really, there is a lot to learn, and I think it's fascinating. Sideburns, they have a whole history, they may seem out of it, but you can work 'em. Take bangs for instance, some people don't want bangs but they need 'em. Last week alone, I went down four seconds on a pin curl and three on a dry set. But that ain't nothin.' 'Cause my cousin Rosie does a Dippity-Do beehive in under three minutes. And that's with the pink tape. Yes, I must admit, some things is hard though. Like, I was never good at math. Especially geometry. So learning face shapes is really hard for me. Like, if you're a square or a triangle, your hair should not be pointed, I think. Like, I had this test cut. She was a square. I set and cut her for a triangle. Big deal. She didn't know the difference. My beauty-training technician throws a conniption and tells her, loud, in front of everyone. But other things is a cinch. Like now we're doing eyebrows. This decade has been one of upheaval and revolution for the eyebrow. So at this point, anything goes. Which especially means, I gotta learn them all. I made eyebrow flashcards. There are seventy-two. And I stayed up all night studying them. And I missed *Miami Vice*. You see, I really need the A in eyebrows 'cause I'm takin' a C in face shapes. Otherwise, I love school. I'm learning things, I love the teachers, everything's great. I got ideas all the time. There's so much to talk about. And meanwhile, Frankie, he's my boyfriend, what's he say? "Charlene, you ain't no fun no more." Frankie, lay off. I mean, he is so pissed off these days. He's not takin' care of himself. I said, Frankie, come on, let me help you. He says, he likes his eyebrow the way it is. I mean, you don't think that if a man pluck his eyebrows he's a fairy, do you? That's what Frankie thinks. You know what my mother says? He's jealous. Yeah, I think he is jealous. 'Cause I am gonna be a professional. My cousin Rosie started out in Yonkers doing $10 cuts. And now she's in California cuttin' hair for *Star Search*. Check that out. Now, with Frankie, okay, things are not the way they used to be. I mean Frankie used to be all over me all the time; it was great! But now, no way. And I'm tryin', I mean, he's the one. So, I decided to put a little romance back into the relationship. I get all dressed up; I plan this big day. I don't know why, but he blows up at me. "Charlene, if you don't stop talkin' permanents and tint jobs, I'm gonna crack your head with this bowling ball." My game is totally off. I could not keep the ball in the lane. "Just can't stay out of the gutter, can you, Charlene?" I am not playing no more. I'll keep score. I mean, I got choices. Now, I never keep score. Like I said, math ain't my thing. Hair is. Now, all around them score sheets they got advertisements, and there is one for the Lucky Star Motor Inn. It's right off the turnpike. You gotta watch when you come out of the tunnel or you're gonna miss it. Check this out. "We specialize in the sophisticated fantasy. Luxury waterbeds. Designer elegance. Couples welcome." And the really good thing about it is, you don't gotta pay for the whole night. Just for four hours. So, I make these little plans, and then I say, "Hey Frankie, I gotta surprise for you." And he says, "Let me guess. Last week it was Disney Doo Orange. The one before, Color Me Plum. As of yesterday, I think you got a special on Frost & Tip." Frankie, you ain't got no imagination. Besides, it's something else. "Good. 'Cause listen, Charlene. I had it up to here with this beauty school. You better start making choices." Check this out. "It goes, or you go." Okay, okay, okay. I don't let this get me down. I go around, I make my plans. I get everything going. Now, I don't give him the name of the place, you see. I just tell him the time, the address. I give him the directions. And I tell him, Frankie, you better be there, because this is very important. Now I get to this Lucky Star Motor Inn, and I am telling you, these people got class. They give me a box of Fanny Farmer. And, a six of Calvin Cooler. Raspberry. I get into this elevator. Even the floor is mirrors. I open the door to my room, and the music starts just like that. Now, I was going crazy with all them room choices: Arabian Nights, Bubble Boudoir, King Tut's Wa-Wa Hut, Alcatraz, Lemon Lounge, Tropical Cabana, and Heaven's Hideaway. What's Frankie gonna like best? I picked the Fun Room. This room, I could not find the bed. And then I realize, it's done up like a pool table. I pull back the covers. There are domino sateen sheets, astroturf for carpeting, stadium lights, a volleyball net over the bathtub, exercise bikes, and a hot-dog cart. And do you know what's in it? Hot dogs. All beef. Now, I figure, okay, Frankie, he's gonna be fifteen minutes late. This gives me time for a hot-

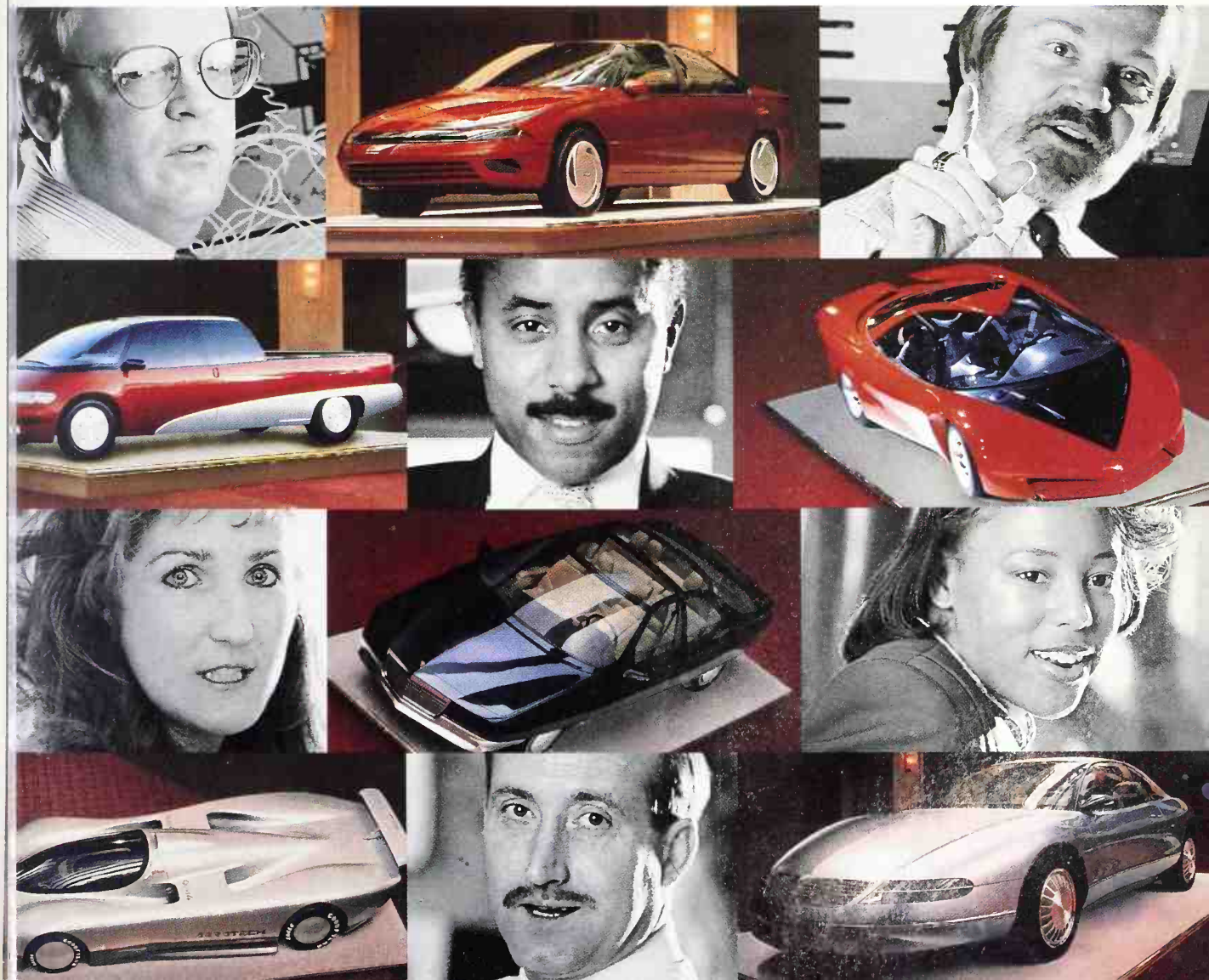
Photograph by Rafael Fuchs

'THE CHALLENGE:

TO KEEP GM'S LEADERSHIP, WE WOULD HAVE TO RESHAPE AND REBUILD THE COMPANY. MARRY TEAMWORK AND TECHNOLOGY. PRODUCE NEW CARS AND TRUCKS THAT WE'RE PROUD TO BUILD, THAT OUR CUSTOMERS WILL BE PROUD TO OWN.

THE CHALLENGE WAS MET—THE RESULTS ARE HERE TODAY."

The 800,000 men and women of General Motors. GM

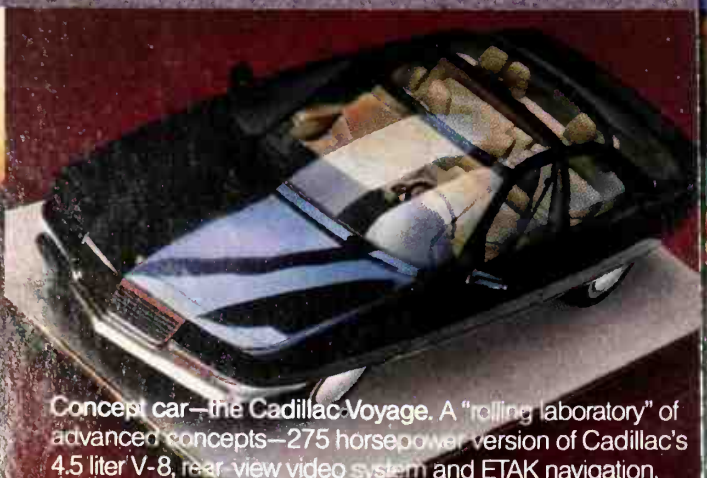


CADILLAC

America's luxury car leader for 39 consecutive years. Renowned for comfort, convenience and sophisticated performance, resulting in an unsurpassed ownership experience.

The Cadillac Allanté. World-class, ultra-luxury, Cadillac style. Only Allanté merges European road manners and craftsmanship with renowned Cadillac comfort and convenience.

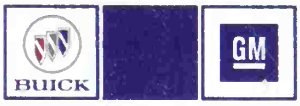
The Cadillac Eldorado. Restyled and longer, with new V-8 power. The rare contemporary automobile that still makes a very personal statement about its driver.



Concept car—the Cadillac Voyage. A "rolling laboratory" of advanced concepts—275 horsepower version of Cadillac's 4.5 liter V-8, rear-view video system and ETAK navigation.

BUICK

There's substance here, in the design, the ride, the power. It's classic, it's timeless... the Premium American Motor Car.



he Buick Regal. It's totally new! An elegant aerodynamic coupe with exclusive styling. The first 6-passenger automobile with V-6 ngine, 4-wheel independent suspension and 4-wheel power disc brakes as standard.

The Buick Reatta. Aerodynamic and visually exciting. An utomobile of beauty, emotion and exhilaration—the Premium merican 2-seater.

Concept car—the Buick Lucerne. A touring car with smooth, muscular grace. 4-wheel independent suspension and 17" alloy wheels create the powerful distinction of Buick.

OLDSMOBILE

Recognized for engineering excellence and advanced technology, Oldsmobile offers a range of fine cars noted for their quality, design, value and driving satisfaction.

The Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme. All new, with styling and aerodynamics in their most advanced forms. Built to exceed the driving expectations of anyone who gets behind the wheel.

The Oldsmobile Cutlass Calais. The Quad 4 engine, developed by Oldsmobile, delivers 4-cylinder economy and more horsepower than many V-8s.

A concept car comes to life—the Oldsmobile Aerotech. Holder of the world's closed-course land speed record—257.123 mph. From the world's fastest-moving car company, known for innovative engineering.

PONTIAC

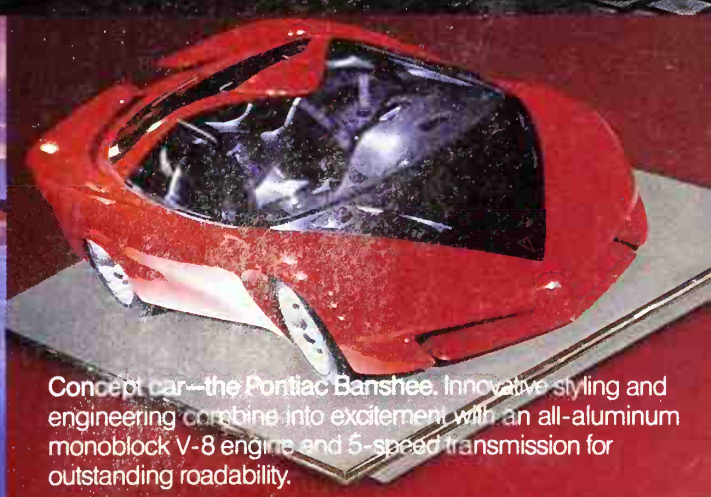
The word here is excitement, with new highs in performance and roadability. As ever, the most sporty, fun-to-drive cars being made in America.

PONTIAC GM

The customer expects the vehicle to perform in a certain way. We're here to make sure it does."

The new Pontiac Grand Prix. *Motor Trend's* "Car of the Year" for 1988. One of the world's most wind-cheating production cars, which means better road handling and better gas mileage for you.

The Pontiac Bonneville SSE. A world-class touring sedan with monochromatic styling, anti-lock brakes and a host of innovations built in as standard equipment.



Concept car—the Pontiac Banshee. Innovative styling and engineering combine into excitement with an all-aluminum monoblock V-8 engine and 5-speed transmission for outstanding roadability.

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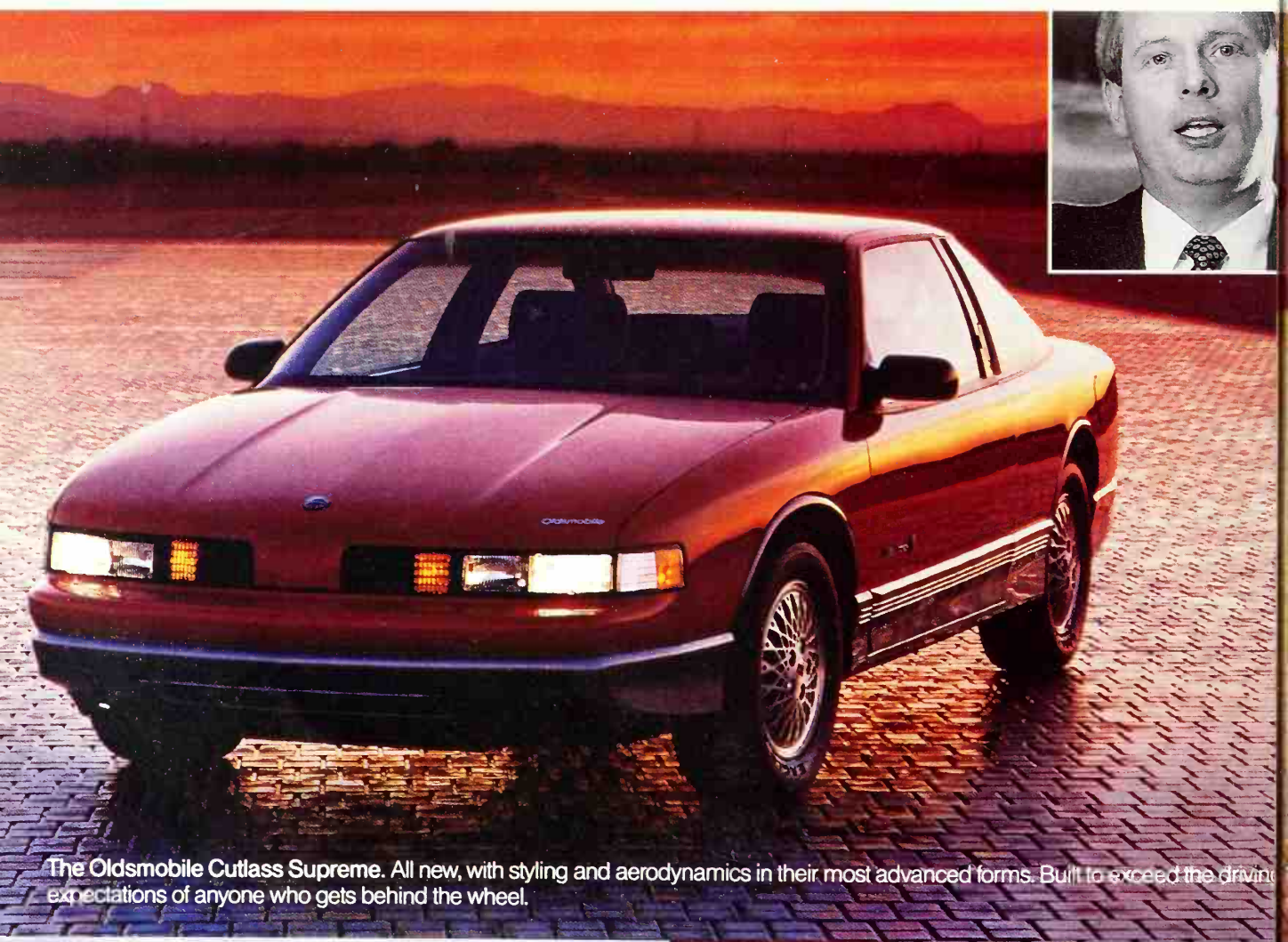

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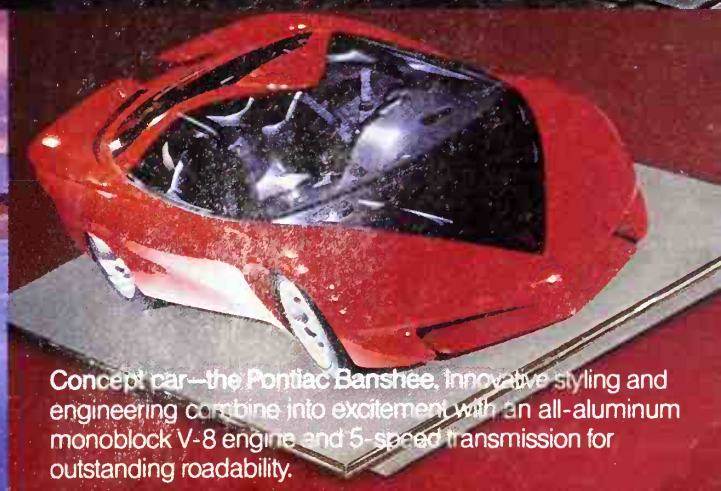

Concept car—the Pontiac Banshee. Innovative styling and engineering combine into excitement with an all-aluminum monoblock V-8 engine and 5-speed transmission for outstanding roadability.

CHEVROLET

The heartbeat of America. It's mainstream U.S.A., long on value and short on pretense. Forever young and on top of that—it's just plain fun.

The Chevrolet Beretta. One of the most beautiful shapes on the road. A true sports coupe which is both aggressive and alluring—one of *Motor Trend's* top 3 cars of the year.

The Chevrolet Sportside Pickup. *Four Wheeler Magazine's* "Four Wheeler of the Year." The character of a work truck and the comfort and style of a passenger vehicle.

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Concept truck—the GMC Centaur. 4-wheel drive and 4-wheel steering. Automotive styling and the workhorse utility of a pickup truck in a single vehicle.

The cars and trucks you have just seen are evidence of GM's commitment to teamwor and technology.

Teamwork. We're reshaping our entire organization, changing the way we work togethe The lines between managers, engineers and assembly people are fading fast. We are taking more time to listen to our customers and to each other.

Technology. We've built new factories, refurbished dozens of old ones. We've brought i new expertise from our Hughes and EDS subsidiaries. Computers. Lasers. Robots.

The results are here today, as seen in the cars and trucks introduced to the automotive world at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York early this year. It was a progress report, featuring our ne products with the quality our customers demand and the value they expect.

But there's more to come—and soon. An example: Saturn, a new General Motors car company dedicated to a "clean sheet" approach to designing, building and selling cars in America. The first Saturn car will be seen in 1990, but already the advantages of Saturn's unique approach to car-building are evident in the GM cars you see today.

SATURN

The job is not yet finished—there's more to be done. But today, the people of GM can proudly say—the vision is paying off.

THE VISION IS PAYING OFF.

Chevrolet • Pontiac • Oldsmobile • Buick • Cadillac • GMC Truck

GM

oil treatment and a no-set quick curl. When I am done, even my hair is voluptuous. Guess what I wore? Golf shoes. Just golf shoes. With the tassles, the spikes, the works. So I take this sexy little pose on the pool-table bed. I take a cue stick. A couple of bowling balls. Now I'm lying there. Fifteen more minutes pass. Piss me off, why don't he. I left my blow-drying seminar twenty minutes early to be on time. Fifteen more minutes pass. My foot is falling asleep. Twenty more minutes. One hour passes. Now it's two hours later. Excuse me. What am I doing all alone at the Lucky Star Motor Inn? I mean, I got choices, don't I? I mean, am I a modern woman or not? I am tired of waitin' on this guy. From now on, I will do whatever I want. And so I had me some fun in that Fun Room. And I don't just mean I took a bubble bath. Big deal. I went into the Lucky Star alone. Big deal. I left the Lucky Star alone. Doesn't bother me. I got pride. Go home, act like I had not been stood up, and started studying for my rods-and-rollers exam. This morning, I wake up, I go downstairs. Who is sitting out front in his car? Frankie. Well, I walk over to him real cool and say, Hey Frankie, where were you last night? "Charlene, I was there." Check it out. "Lemon Lounge. We had a great time. Get in. Want a ride?" Okay, okay, okay. I look at this lowlife, and I say to him, No thanks, I'll walk. So I walked, and I was thinkin', okay, when Frankie comes to me on his grubby little hands and knees and says, "Charlene, I'm sorry, let's make up, huh?" I won't! And when he says, "Give your Frankie a kissie, kissie, kissie," I won't. And when he says, "Tell your Frankie who's the best lookin' guy you know? Tell me, tell me, tell me," I won't. Check this out. I will do whatever I want. Because one day, I'll be in Hollywood, cuttin' hair for *Star Search*.

BETH BROWDE *is a playwright and actress. Her play* Temporary Shelter, *from which this piece is taken, was recently performed at the National Theatre in Washington, D.C.*

TEMPORARY SHELTER

My mom tried to drive me off a bridge once. I'm not kidding. The Triborough Bridge. She was in a really bad mood—really bad. She was taking me to the airport so I could visit my dad in Paris. The whole thing was her idea—I didn't want to go to Paris anyway, and I would've been happy to take the bus to the airport.

Now the truth is, I think she'd been mad at me for a while—basically since I was born. But some days we got along fine. Anyway, she's driving me to the airport and Grandpa is in the front seat. Now Grandpa was the best person I ever knew. He was nice to everyone no matter what. So she stops the car and says to him, Get out of the car. I'm going to kill her and I don't want you to get hurt. He doesn't really believe her. You don't mean that dear, he says. But she insists she does mean it. She is going to kill me. And he gets out. One hundred twenty-fifth and Broadway.

Now, I don't think I thought she meant it, 'cause I just stayed there in the backseat and didn't say a word. At the time I thought silence was the most sophisticated approach—I mean, I was only eighteen. But whenever she started screaming at me, I would just shut up and look out the window. She hated that. I don't remember what she was saying. She always liked to discuss her impending divorce in the car.

One time on Interstate 81, in the middle of Pennsylvania, she's yelling at me and my brother and she just stops the car—right in the middle lane. She says to my brother, I'm not going any further until you tell me who you would rather see dead—me or your father. Cars are whizzing by us, honking and pointing. My brother thinks the whole thing is pretty funny, and he says, If I promise to answer the question,will you drive? So she says Yes and starts driving and he says, You. I'd rather see you dead.

The next day she tried to run him over.

That's the main reason to keep my mouth shut.

That's what I did the whole time I was growing up—kept my mouth shut. There's a good and a bad side to it. The bad side is it can take you half an hour to find the bathroom in a strange place. But the good side is you don't say anything stupid, even if you are thinking it. If you keep your mouth shut long enough, someone's bound to give you a hint.

But sometimes I can't help talking. Probably I said something wrong. Anyway, there we were driving along 125th Street. She's telling me about how I'm gonna get up in court and tell the truth about what a bastard my father is. Then I make a mistake. We're just about at Lenox Avenue and I say, Look Mom, I don't understand. What's the point of being married to someone who doesn't want to be married to you? She starts screaming, floors it, and tries to drive the car right into the wall of this Kentucky Fried Chicken—she turned into two lanes of oncoming traffic. So I dive headfirst from the backseat

Photograph by Jyll Johnstone

into the brake. Her legs are jerking and she's spazzing out. Somehow we stop and I grab the keys, screaming my head off for help. The only thing is, we're there in this giant Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight blocking an entire intersection in the middle of Harlem. She's wearing her mink coat and all this jewelry. All these black people are crowding around the car. We look like two rich crazy ladies, and I think: I'm a liberal, but how are they going to know? And I'm afraid to open the door. I'm totally panicked. And all of a sudden my mom is completely calm. She says, Janice, give me the keys and I will drive you to the airport. That's it. Not please, not I'm sorry, just give me the keys. And you know what? I gave her the keys.

So she starts up again and I'm in the front seat this time. We don't talk. I just look out the window. I don't even remember thinking—just blank. Soon she's saying I should have a good time in Paris, because she'll be dead when I get back. And I say something really stupid, So, who's supposed to feed the dog while you're dead? I mean, I know it was a really stupid thing to say, but I was thinking of the time before when she took fifty Seconals and left a note in the kitchen that said, While I'm dead, feed the dog.

By now we're on the bridge. She starts screaming that she is really going to kill me, and she turns sharp to the right across two lanes. I grab the wheel and try to jam on the brake, and we sort of bounce off this cement embankment. And I grab the keys again.

And the same thing happens again. I'm crying and screaming, and she's yelling and spazzing out. Two lanes of traffic on the bridge are stopped and honking at us. Then all of a sudden she's fine, like nothing happened. She tells me to give her back the keys, she promises not to kill me, and so I do.

That seems really weird, doesn't it—me just giving her back the keys like that.

So it was about four years later that I went and found this shrink, Phyllis. She was nice. By then my mom had died. It was like, while she was alive, I didn't really want to talk about it too much. I mean, I guess I'm lucky she died so I could stop thinking I was the one who was crazy.

But one day I'm in there telling this shrink, Phyllis, about being driven off the bridge, and the time she tried to run my brother over and the Seconals—all those stories. And Phyllis is listening real intently. And suddenly I think, oh my God. How is she gonna know I'm not just making this up? What if my mom was just this nice lady who baked cookies and sent me presents? How would she know? Everything she knows about me is what I say. What if I'm lying and don't even know it, and I'm just deluded, and none of the stuff I remember actually happened?

So, anyway, here's what happened with my mom. She finally gets me to the airport. Nobody was dead, but I have to say I was probably the least excited person with a ticket to Paris at Kennedy Airport. I don't have the slightest idea what I said to her when I got there, but she stormed out, saying, Have a good time. I'll be dead when you get back. At that point I wouldn't have minded if she was dead, but I still wasn't in the mood to go to Paris. I find out that there's a place in the basement of the airport where you can make an emergency transatlantic call. So I go down there and I find this Air France office, and I tell the guy it's an emergency, I have to call my father in Paris. Now, you would think, just by the way I looked—I was crying so hard I could hardly talk—you would think someone would just make the call. But this guy says he has to know why or he can't do it. So I tell him basically my mother just tried to kill me on the way to the airport and just left saying she was going to kill herself. He gets the number of my dad's hotel and calls. But there's no answer.

So he says to me in his most sympathetic voice, I'm a businessman, just like your father. And the most efficient way to handle this is for you to get on the plane, meet with him in Paris, and then, if you want to, take the next flight back. That was the most absurd thing I had ever heard.

I started to argue with him, when in walks my mother like she's on her way to a garden party, smiling and completely together. She says, I thought you'd be here. Come on dear, we don't want you to miss your plane.

Well, that guy just looked at me like I was out of my mind. So this must be your mother, he says. Your daughter and I were just having a little chat. He smiled at me.

MIKE FEDER *has been telling stories on WBAI, a radio station in New York City, for seven years. A collection of his stories, including* "Here's Herbie," *will be published by Crown this fall.*

HERE'S HERBIE

When I was about fifteen, I was possessed of a great many psychosomatic complaints. A lot of this had to do with just trying to compete, although fruitlessly, with my mother, who was always sick on a very grand scale—mentally and physically. Nevertheless, as a loving son, I had inherited a great deal of her complaints and ailments, although I believe I was probably much healthier than I thought I was.

I was very allergic in those days to cats, grass,

and trees, and I had a great many other allergies that I think a lot of Jewish boys are familiar with. There was an allergist I had to go to. He lived in Manhattan, which for a wimp boy like myself was a long adventurous trip. It held a lot of terrors for me, one of which was the subway. I lived way out in Queens, on the edge of the city near Nassau County. I had to take a bus to the train, then catch the F train into Manhattan, get off, go to the allergist, and come back.

One morning I'm leaving my house, and I'm in my constant state of teenage depression because in those days my mother was often ill, and she was sitting in her room moaning or calling her mother to complain that she wished she never had children. Sort of a cheery way to start my day.

Back then there wasn't all that much subway violence. There weren't that many teenagers wandering around eating people and throwing them on the tracks. What bothered me was that there were so many machines down there of such a powerful nature, and it was so dark and so far under the ground that I always felt that the tunnel was going to fall in on me, that the train would smash into a wall and kill us all. I should have brought a book. I would have been better off.

I get on the front car. I always got on the front car of a train, and to this day I still like to get on the front car. I think it has something to do with some sort of identification with the surge of power that's involved in being in the front of a train. When you're a teenager in the city, one of the most powerful things that you can have any personal connection with, since horses and bulls are not around, is a train. When that train comes rumbling and roaring into the station and you're a teenager, it just fills your blood with a kind of crazy excitement. So I always used to get on the first car of the train and sit down. Also, without realizing it, I always sat somewhere near the front of the front car and looked a little bit out the window with the reinforced glass in the front of the car. I would sit there, but one thing I never seemed to have the nerve to do, although I wanted to, was to go up and look out the window.

First of all, I felt that it would be extremely uncool to stand there like some jerk-off and just stare out the window. When I was fifteen, I didn't want to seem like I was six. I wanted to look out the front of the train but I never would, so a terrible tug-of-war took place in my mind. The best I could do was sit close to the window and look from the corner of my eye out the window.

We're rumbling along, and we go about three or four stops, the doors open and they close and just before they close absolutely a big fat hand gets thrust through the doors. So then the doors open again 'cause this hand wouldn't move, and in comes what we used to call, when I was a teenager, a retard. This guy, who could have been anywhere from fifteen to thirty-five, retarded, comes onto the train with a nutty look on his face. Now, on this car that I was sitting in there were about four or five people—two businessmen, a few ladies going shopping—and they're all looking at books or Bibles or reading the *New York Times*, or something like that. And I wasn't doing anything except sitting there, worried—the Jewish Hamlet from Queens wondering about whether to be or not to be on the F train.

I'm sitting there, and this guy comes in and says, "Herbie's here. Herbie is here!" with this loud voice and the stupidest grin. He was slump-shouldered with a potbelly, had flat black shoes on, and a loose jacket that looked real big in front, like he was pregnant. He had dim eyes, a big thick jaw, and big hairy ears. And he says to nobody in particular, but in a loud and happy voice, "Here's Herbie. Herbie is here!"

I'm thinking to myself, oh God, don't let this retard sit down next to me. I want a little privacy in my misery. Everybody else in the train just kept staring at their newspapers. But I couldn't help watching this guy Herbie with that terrible sick knowledge that people who are a little freakish or lonely or who live in a very strange family like I did, unfortunately, have in common with other people who have problems. So I was watching him with a combined feeling of disgust and terrible unwanted identity. He's yelling, "Here's Herbie, here's Herbie," looks around, sees that nobody really cares, and then without further ado, he unzips his jacket and pulls out, of all things, a steering wheel—the kind you give kids, with a suction cup to stick on the dashboard—and he goes over to this window that I had sort of been looking out of but didn't have the nerve to go to. He moistens the suction cup with some spit—disgusting—and sticks it right on the window. So this retard is now steering the train. And he has absolutely no doubts—he's like Albert Schweitzer and Jonas Salk, this guy. From the day he is born he knows he's gonna conquer the Zambezi or be the greatest ice-cream salesman—one of those kinds of guys. Whereas me, a total halfwit, I had no idea what I wanted to do, if I even wanted to do anything, or if I even wanted to be.

So the train is rumbling along and Herbie is standing there with his red plastic steering wheel

Photograph by Keith Boro

steering the train. The train pulls into Hillside Avenue, and then pulls out, and it's rumbling along, clackety, clackety, clack. On a hard curve, he just sort of leans into it, like when you're driving a car. He's having the time of his life. The other passengers, since he wasn't looking around, were looking at him with this amused, tolerant, pitying look on their faces.

I was thinking to myself, Jesus Christ, here's this guy, a retard, a jerk, and I am so brilliant, I do well in school, I'm a handsome little devil, my mother loves me, I'm athletic, do baseball cards better, and here's this guy nobody could possibly care about, who looks like a pile of hay, comes on and does the one thing that I had sort of always wanted to do on the train. He just went right up there and he's driving the train.

The train's running along and I see the conductor pushing the levers and looking out. He might as well have been reading a magazine. Next to him, about a foot away,although he can't see him, is Herbie riding for his life, driving what might as well have been the USS *Enterprise* on its five-year mission through space.

Now we're crossing the river. We roar through the tunnel into Manhattan. More people are getting on the train, and they see Herbie, and—you know how in New York you create a vacuum between yourself and whatever nut du jour happens to be on, you just stay away from him—so people are coming on and getting off, and Herbie notices not a bit. He's screaming, "Here's Herbie, here's Herbie," and he's driving that train wherever it has to go.

Well, all strange things come to an end. We got to my stop on the East Side. As I leave, Herbie is still there, drumming his foot, waiting impatiently to drive his train.

I get to the allergist, and this schmegege says, "How are we doin' Mike?" This guy's World War II vintage. He's about fifty, bald, a gigantic guy, tough, bluff, and hearty, who makes his living by sticking needles in young people. Whether it did any good is beyond me. I continued to sneeze my head off until I was thirty-four years old anyhow. He sticks a couple of needles in my arm and I get out fast.

So I get back on the train and I'm headed toward Queens. The train gathers speed, it's about three in the afternoon, and I'm very depressed now. First of all, this experience with Herbie driving the train and me not being able to do it really got on my nerves. And I know I'm going to go home and my mother's gonna be in her room, and she's gonna be upset, and the rabbi is gonna be there, probably. And I'm smarting from these injections in my arm, thinking about Herbie.

Without thinking, I'd gotten on the first car again. I look sideways at the front window, and this feeling comes over me of what-the-hell. My life is a total cesspool anyhow, and here I am—life is passing me by, there are millions of things I want to do, and I never do them. I'm just gonna do it.

I walk over, and I put my face right up against the window of the train, and I look out. I started losing my feeling of self-consciousness that anybody was looking at me. It was as beautiful as I ever imagined it to be. Here I am in the front of this great train which has no thought for anybody else at all. This train represents pure power. It just surges through this tunnel. It's gotta be the feeling that the first sperm has when those millions and billions of sperms just get out there and a gun goes off and they start to race for that egg. The first, strongest, biggest sperm goes whammo—he knows just where he's going. Well, that's what the train was doing. It was charging through that tunnel, passing people by like they were ants. It represented everything that I wasn't. Here I am, this little weak wimp boy getting ready to go home to my mommy in Queens, and this train is zooming along.

I stick my nose and my face against the window and I look down the track. Have you ever had the childlikeness or even just the guts to get up there and look out the front of a train? It's fantastic. It's a great sight. You have this beautiful, dark, long, cool tunnel, and the train charges through it because even though it's only going maybe thirty or thirty-five miles per hour, if that fast, with the walls only a half a foot away it seems like it's charging at a hundred miles an hour. At the far end you can see the lights of another station, but in between, when it's really dark, you can see all kinds of red and green traffic and signal lights. They look like beautiful stars or jewels off in the distance.

All of a sudden everything disappears, and it's just me and this train. And all of a sudden, I'm driving this train. I feel my fingers kind of twitching and I wish I had the same kind of steering wheel Herbie has. About halfway along, in Astoria, I'm really into it. I'm driving this train and these beautiful lights are ahead of me in this dark tunnel.

Then all of a sudden I pass one of those spots—you know, where you can see a train coming in the other direction because there's not a wall in between—and the train slows down a little bit, and I see another train coming in the distance. I look in the front window and who do I see but Herbie driving the train the other way! I couldn't believe it. There he is, he's getting closer and closer, and then I know he sees me. I see him with his steering wheel, he's driving the train, he sees me, I'm driving this train, and it was a moment of identification I cannot describe to you. The kind of moment known to only a great starfleet commander, Captain Kirk, or the leader of

a great squad of airplanes, Colonel Doolittle. It's a moment that only a few people have in common. We're both driving these powerful machines, many lives depend on us, the destiny perhaps of the universe, and we're coming closer and closer, and he lifts his hand, smiles and waves at me, and I forget everything. I forget my self-consciousness. I forget I'm not a retard. I forget he is a retard. I forget I'm a wimp. I raise my hand and we give each other a salute, kind of a grim but professional understanding that two great men, responsible for the destinies of millions of people, are at the helm.

JEFFREY ESSMANN *was born in the Midwest—"a land of jumbo cashews and toy collies"—and has performed his one-man shows at Dixon Place and La Mama theaters.*

HEAVEN AND MR. TAYLOR

My brother wore a bracelet. A little silver one with his name, address, and birth date on it. My sister had one, too, and every time she'd show it to me she'd jerk her hair behind her ear except for a few strands that always got stuck on the corner of her mouth. I'd say she looked like a spaz. She'd say she wanted that to happen.

So they both had these bracelets. Death bracelets. If anything ever happened to them, like if they ever hid in a pile of leaves by the curb and a car parked on them, these bracelets would identify what was left. My parents didn't get me a bracelet. I wasn't the kind of kid who figured they'd realize how much they loved me if I were dead. I was the kind of kid who figured they'd realize how much they loved me if my brother and sister were dead. But I don't think I wanted them dead. I don't think so. I just wanted them gone, and besides, something about kidnapping had always appealed to me. Lying in the lower bunk at night, sucking my thumb, I'd pictured it a million times: the car pulling over, the door opening, the smell of chocolate and stale Old Spice, tobacco-stained teeth—"Your mother sent me to pick you up from school."

I'd know I was supposed to scratch the license number in the dirt, but just as I reached for the stick a hand would grab my wrist. Timex watch. He'd smile at me—and I think I'd smile back. I'd wake up with teeth prints in my thumb.

It was hot the afternoon I met Mr. Taylor. I'd been playing with my doctor kit, I'd eaten all my pills and I was bored. Then I heard bells. I thought it was just the pills. But it wasn't; it was Good Humor. The truck was halfway down the block. I jumped the porch railing and ran across the lawn. Just as I reached the edge, my foot caught the handle of my wagon, and I came down hard on the sidewalk. There was blood. The truck pulled over and Taylor jumped out.

"You okay, kid?"

But I couldn't hear him through the bells and the blood pounding in my head. I just kept watching the red leak out of my knee and hoping that a whole bunch of ants wouldn't come out of the lawn and eat me. Taylor ran to the truck and came back with a handful of ice shavings and a grape popsicle. When the ice touched my knee I wanted to cry, but I wouldn't. Not in front of him.

"Anything else I can do for you, kid?"

"Yeah, you can turn off those goddamn bells."

I'd listened to my father watch football on TV.

Taylor was an all-right guy, like any chump in the ice-cream racket. He couldn't have been more than sixteen. He wore a spiffy white suit and had a goofy sneer of a smile that showed off a chipped front tooth. I liked that. But then I liked anyone with teeth problems since I had lost most of mine that year.

I was still wearing my little stethoscope. He flipped it and said, "So you're a doctor, huh?" My lips were turning purple. There were heat bugs. I said, "Yeah, lemme check your heart." I put the stethoscope right over a chocolate stain on his front pocket and—cross my heart—I could hear it beating. Then my stupid brother came out in his Zorro outfit. My sister was right behind him in a hula skirt and handcuffs.

"Mom says you're supposed to pick up all this stuff and come in the house."

Something about the way he was waving his arm made his bracelet catch the sun and it was shining right in my eyes. I don't know, I guess I went crazy for a second. I shoved the bloody ice right in his face and said, "Look, real blood!"

My sister screamed, my brother said he was telling, and both of them ran in the house.

"I guess I better go in. Thanks for saving my knee and stuff."

I turned to go in the house. The heat bugs were screaming. Taylor said, "If I had a brother like that, I'd kill him."

"You would? You, uh, you gotta push popsicles all afternoon or you get some time off?"

"I get off later this afternoon."

"Yeah? Why 'oncha meet me at Parker's drugstore when the big hand is on the twelve and the

Photograph by Roy Blakey

little hand is on the four."

Parker's. Nobody went to Parker's anymore, not since they opened the mall. Nobody except Billy Thompson. Poor kid. Flunked second grade, and, well, you know the rest. That soda after school became three or four. At school you'd always notice he had a few Hershey's Kisses in his pocket. "I can stop whenever I want to," he said.

Then the money ran out. He sold his baseball card collection, his bike—even rented his little brother to the girls to play house. Now he hung out at Parker's. If he got lucky, Mrs. Parker would turn her back and he could swipe a Chunky. Today he wasn't so lucky. He was eating pure sugar out of little envelopes with pictures of the presidents on them. He was missing James Polk.

I flipped through a coloring book while I waited for Taylor. Billy fingered me for a nickel.

"Here's a dime. Now beat it, has-been."

Taylor showed in his civvies: faded jeans ripped at the knee and a madras shirt with a bad case of hemophilia. We ordered a couple root beers. Taylor pulled out a cigarette like it was a concealed weapon and lit a kitchen match with his thumb. He was that cool.

"So what's up, kid?"

"You like stories, Taylor? Bedtime stories? I do. Lemme tell you one of my favorites: Once upon a time a little boy and girl were coming home late from school. A nice stranger offered them a ride and they were never seen again. And their little brother lived happily ever after."

"And the nice stranger?"

"He sent a ransom note and got very rich."

"Ransom note? So he brings the kids back?"

"No, he doesn't bring them back."

"Well, what—"

"I don't know what happens to them. I don't want to know what happens to them. Parker, two more root beers. Please!"

Taylor squinted at me through the smoke and started to smile that sneer of his. I wanted to spin around on my stool, but I wouldn't give him that satisfaction. I stared at the counter. There was a fortune-teller napkin holder on it. It had a little gypsy's face on it and eight or nine little question marks floating around her head.

"So, Taylor, are you in or aren't you?"

He took a penny from his loafer and put it in the fortune-teller napkin holder. He handed me the fortune. I wished I could read.

The day of the job my brother had a Boy Scout meeting after school and my sister stayed after to hang molecules for the science fair. They were about halfway home before they noticed they were being tailed by a Good Humor truck. They fell for it—almost. They got suspicious when Taylor said he was out of Dream Pops but if they got in the truck he'd take them back to the factory for more. They'd started to back away when I came out from behind a tree with my miniature Indian scalping knife I'd gotten up at the lake that summer.

"All right, get into the truck nice and quiet."

Of course my stupid brother had to show off. He hit me in the chest really hard and the knife flew up and cut my cheek. More blood. When I got home, my parents asked how I'd hurt myself. I told them I'd gotten on the wrong side of a hula hoop.

It was a clean job: no tape recordings, no phone calls, no body parts in the mail. Just the ransom note. And the bracelets. Easy street, right? But when the money was paid and no kids showed, it got tense around the house. It started to get to me. I got into strange trips. Like bed-wetting.

The double cross hit a couple days later. Coming out of my nap one afternoon, I thought I heard voices, little kids' voices, accusing, telling on me. When I came downstairs the old man was just shutting the front door and my mother was putting something in the ashtray.

"Who was here?"

"No one, honey. You must have been dreaming."

But they were acting funny, too quiet, guilty. Like the time I came in their room without knocking and they said they were just taking mommy's temperature. When they left the living room I unfolded the thing she'd put in the ashtray. It was a little white envelope with a few grains of sugar still in it. It was James Polk.

They dropped the net at the memorial service. Coming out of the chapel, my cousin Frank said to me, "My mom says you're going to have to go live with Aunt Gladys." Aunt Gladys. She always smelled of lavender water and her teeth clicked when she ate. Everything started spinning, and for a second there I thought I was gonna blow my Maypo. I had a vision of Billy Thompson swinging very high on a swing—by his neck. But it was interrupted by a car pulling up to the curb, the door opening, the Timex watch—and Taylor. He pulled me into the front seat and we gunned it.

The siblings were stashed at his parents' cabin upstate. We were gonna pick them up and head for Africa and they were gonna have to do whatever we said for the rest of their lives. What a setup.

Getting hit by a Mack truck is everything it's cracked up to be. Taylor and I never saw him; he never saw us. I remembered hearing once that if you died before you were seven you got to be an angel. I figured if you were that young you didn't get to be a powerful one like an archangel or even a guardian angel. You probably had to be one of the little ones hovering around the Blessed Virgin Mary's feet. They were always too fat and had their peepees showing. Or else they had no bod-

ies at all, just little wings. I didn't want that.

My body wasn't identified for about a week. You see, I didn't have a bracelet.

DEBORAH MARGOLIN *has performed her one-woman shows at New York City's Dixon Place, P.S. 122, Westbeth Theatre Center, and WOW.*

N

Pleased to meet you. . . I'm silent N. . .I'm the letter N in the word CONDEMN. . .NNNNN. . . Jesus! A man said me the other day. . .it was strange. . .First I was floating on the lips of a French woman who was using a lot of plural verbs. . .PLEUR. . .*Elles pleur.* . .ENT. . .I was stuck all day between E and T, and wishing they would just phone home. . .when a strange man said me. . .he said me so beautifully. . .he tongued me. . .He said, This painting of a woman looks like it's all one stroke. . .just one line. . .I feel that I could pick the line up off the canvas at her fingertips and pull 'til she's completely dislimNed. He was a handsome and sexy man. . .I turned to smoke on his soft palate, perched on the tip of his tongue, and I floated out his nostrils and around to where his hair touched his collar. I love that area of a person. . .the Nape of the Neck. . .I spend a lot of time in people's nostrils. . .you know, people with colds, that kind of thing. . .I figure prominently in the sneeze. . .I come roaring out like one of Bob Fosse's dancers split right down the middle in a crash of jazz. . .

But this man. . .mmmmmmNNNNNNNN . . .I wanted to get him mad enough to curse because I wanted him to say me really sweet. . .so I went through his nostrils into his sinus cavity and created a rite-of-spring sort of disturbance. . .the kind bees make in honeysuckle. . . He was flirting with someone at the museum. And he made this pretentious remark about the nude painting being so DISLIMNABLE. . .I think he was about to kiss her. . .

Yeah. . .so he was about to kiss her when I altered his senses completely. . .his eyes filled with water and he said it, O, he said it, O, he said, GODDAMNNNNNNNNNNNNNN!

I flew back to his uvula and shook with the air. . .and the woman left. . .she was too good for him anyway. . .she didn't buy that bullshit. . .it saved her slapping his face. . .

When I'm silent, I'm undressed, y'know. . .but when I get voiced I get dressed. . .when the going gets tough, the tough get going. . .SOLEMN becomes SOLEMNNNITY. . .And I go from nude to dressed in a moment. . .like that woman in the painting. . .I bet she wanted to grab a bathrobe real fast in front of a lech like that. . .

You know, when letters meet in words it's not a simple thing. . .a word is a whole show made up of active letters. . .and the energy between letters is. . .physical, you know. . .like actors on the stage. When you say a word you see it, don't you?. . .you lick it. . .and when you write a word down you paint portraits of these actors. . .for example, the word MISOGYNIST is like a Chekhov play because all the letters just stand around wondering how to relate to each other, the Greek roots stick out all over the place, and when it's said and done, the meaning is very sad. . .

So. I was in a relationship. . .that didn't work out. You see me at a depressed and unfocused moment in my life, rushing around people's mouths and nostrils. . . I didn't used to do that so much. . . and I. . . I had everything I ever wanted but I didn't know it. . . you may already have heard. . . I was living with silent G. When he's lower case he is so well HUNGNG, down below the baseline, the floor of the letter, and when he's upper case his form is so beautiful, curving around and back in toward himself like self-recrimination. . . like remorse. . . like GUILT!

I first met him when we were both in the word IMPUGN, and then we started hanging around together in formal words like CONDIGN. . .or in words where I was voiced, and cuddled myself on either side of him while he stayed silent. . . women do that shit for men all the time. . .

Then we moved toward a more mutual relationship. . .we were INDIGNANT! both voiced and full of bristle. . .and I was. . .in love, I think. . .and I found I was PREGNANT. . .my body was changing. . .then things deepened. . .we became POIGNANT. . .

I had baby YYY and he went silent again. . .! don't know. . .he took a traveling job. . .he's a lug nut on the wheel of a truck that's moving, moving, moving all night. . .the way he used to move me. . .I feel it when he gets knocked out of ALIGNMENT. . .one of the places where we lived together for so long. . .so long. . .

So what's left for me? The ballet of my upper case, the yoga of my lower case, my little place in the dictionary upstate. Come visit me there, if you want, unvoiced, on the tip of some word. Whoever you are, we'll find a way to be together, or at least on either side of a vowel.

Or, if you want, just write me a letter. . . ■

Photograph by Dona Ann McAdams

"Still–in a way–nobody sees a flower–really–
it is so small–we haven't time–
and to see takes time, like to have a friend takes time."
—Georgia O'Keeffe

Red Poppy, 1927 *Oil on canvas 7" × 9", Private collection, Geneva*

Photography by Malcolm Varon

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE 1887-1986

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A FIELD GUIDE TO THE SYNTHETIC LANDSCAPE

Toward a new environmental ethic

By Frederick Turner

At first it looks like a big, untidy field—tall grass infested with weeds. But then, looking a little longer and a little more carefully, my mind reorders it. There is an unfamiliar, breathtaking, pale yellowish jade freshness in the green, and a preciseness and laciness in the texture that reminds me of wildflowers, the ones I've seen along rocky seacoasts or in alpine meadows. These grasses are at home where they are: the towering bluestem and Indian grass in the damper hollows; the twisted awns of the drier stipa; the feathery offset florets of the side oats grama; the brilliant emerald clumps of hair-leaved dropseed. Then there are the broad-leaved plants. Some are giants: the compass plant, with its leathery handlike leaves; the blanched ultraviolet flowers of the downy phlox; the black-eyed susan, the hoary puccoon, and the coneflower; and below, the cold green shields of the prairie dock, the exquisite Turk's-cap lily, the leadplant thought by early miners to indicate the presence of ore, the purple-and-white prairie clovers; and look—a mottled white-violet-chocolate prairie orchid. Walking on the drier slopes that heave up sunlit into a sky darkening toward a squall, I can see wild roses, sage, horsetails. And there are seedlings from the nearby grove of savanna oaks that will, if a prairie fire does not kill them, transform these grassy hills (after a few decades) into a shadowy forest.

This *is* a prairie, then. But again, things are not always as they seem. This is Greene Prairie, planted forty years ago by the ecological restorationist Henry Greene on forty acres of degraded Wisconsin farmland. It is part of the University of Wisconsin's arboretum, which all told has more than a hundred acres of thriving prairie. Almost every prairie plant here is descended from seeds or whole specimens found in old cemeteries, along railroad rights-of-way, or on other unfarmed scraps of land in southern Wisconsin. Greene Prairie was one of the first projects of its kind in the country, but now many such restorations are under way.

How does one plant a prairie? First the existing vegetation—in Wisconsin, mostly European grasses or weeds—must be plowed under or burnt off. The height of the water table is considered. Sweating gangs of young volunteers in dungarees harvest the wild seeds or dig up clumps of virgin sod.

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It could be argued that the lovely complex tissue of the biosphere, threatened as it is, needs our best talents if it is to survive

A prairie contains over 200 species of plants alone, not counting the bacteria, the mycorrhizal fungi in the rootweb, the insects, animals, and birds. The land is planted; then the real hard work, the weeding, begins. The volunteers must be drilled meticulously on the differences between native and alien species, a process that engenders an extraordinary familiarity with the land. Then, after a few seasons of backbreaking work, the prairie is established, and it begins to police and nourish itself.

Much has been written about the marvelous interdependence of species in the wild; the most recent thinking treats ecological systems such as prairies as if they were indeed single entities, with different organs for different functions. The Gaia Hypothesis, advanced by the visionary British ecologist James Lovelock, proposes that the entire planet is itself such an organism—a living being in the wastes of space. In the prairie, the fine network of mycorrhizal fungi that flourishes below the soil surface acts as a primitive nervous system, linking the plants and regulating the flow of nutrients. The actual soil of a healthy prairie is paradoxically very poor, because almost all the nutrients are in circulation in the living biomass—the birds and bees, plants and trees. Creating the prairie, the volunteers and the ecologists who led them created nature—man-made nature.

Nearly three years ago, in an essay in these pages*, I called for the cultivation of a new American garden—a fresh kind of ecological thinking that would bridge the deep and damaging gap in the American imagination between nature and humanity, the protected wilderness area and the exploited landscape. I came to the arboretum at the University of Wisconsin in search of that garden, and I believe that I found it—or at least one of the core elements of it—in the work of the ecological restorationists. Nor are the restorationists cultivating just in Wisconsin. Wetlands are being restored around the country, and in California, redwood forests. There is the *Bosques Colón* (Forests of Columbus) project in the West Indies, and Dan Janzen's visionary tropical dry-forest restoration project in Costa Rica. It seems to me we have here the elements of a new kind of environmental ethic, one which accepts human participation in nature as essential for us and for the world, and which actively seeks out ways in which that participation can be deepened and extended. It could be argued that the lovely complex tissue of the biosphere, threatened as it is, needs our best talents if it is to survive.

If the restored prairie is one prototype of the American garden, it should also be understood as the culmination of a long tradition, the Arcadian tradition. What is Arcadia? One may find it in the paintings of Giorgione, Bellini, Titian; of Lorrain, Poussin, Chardin. In the Western landscape-gardening tradition it consists of a set of ideas and tastes handed down to us, beginning with the biblical gardens of Egypt and Babylon; then on to the Greek gardens celebrated by Homer in his mythical Phaiakia; to the Roman gardens of volcanic Sicily, Naples, and the Alban hills; and thence to the gardens of northern Europe—Pope's Twickenham garden, Stourhead, Monet's Clos Normand at Giverny; and then across the Atlantic to the painted landscapes of the Hudson River school, the literary ones of Thoreau, and the real ones of Frederick Law Olmsted. It took the bitter check of the Dust Bowl to bring about the last, severest, and most demanding notion of the Arcadian ideal. That notion came to Aldo Leopold, the author of *A Sand County Almanac*, one of the founders of the University of Wisconsin arboretum, and the father of its restored prairie.

Arcadia, if we may speak broadly, is a place where human beings cooperate with nature to produce a richness of ecological variety that would not otherwise exist. Arcadia undergoes continuous but mild change. It is

* "Cultivating the American Garden: Toward a Secular View of Nature," *Harper's Magazine*, August 1985.

Illustrations by Marc Yankus

adaptable to all sorts of minor ecological alteration; nevertheless, it works to conserve, to protect and preserve what is needed and what is good—it maintains itself. Perhaps it is a country of the mind only, but we can see traces of it in the hills of Tuscany, the hedgerow and beech landscape of the Cotswolds, the savannas of Africa, and on the prairies of the Midwest. We are drawn to such places, I think, because they remind us, way down in our genes, of the savannas where we achieved our definitive evolution—where human beings became human beings.

But it could be that our very instinct for Arcadia misleads us, fools us into thinking we can re-create the place of our origins; this explains why we might accept a "reproduction" for true nature itself. In my admiration of the restored prairie, am I not like a child gazing through the glass of a museum showcase? Is not the restored prairie little better than a dusty little diorama, with its perpetually brilliant sky lit dimly by the fluorescents, its claustrophobic trompe l'oeil perspective, its taxidermized specimens frozen forever in some "natural" act of forage or nest building?

The preservationists of the old fire-and-brimstone school would say just this. For them the discipline of ecology is essentially elegiac, essentially a eulogy to what we humans have destroyed; their science is a postmortem, their myth is of a primal crime by which we are all tainted: the murder of nature. We cannot expiate, let alone compensate for this crime; the best we can do is acknowledge it publicly by setting aside whatever relatively untouched places remain and keeping human beings out of them. For such perfectionists the study of nature is essentially passive and classificatory; action and experiment would be unwarranted. A real diorama might not disturb their fundamental sense of rightness so much as would a restored prairie. A diorama, after all, does depict nature as a corpse—*nature morte*, as the French call a still life.

One can encounter the dismal grandeur of this position, its *schadenfreude*, in many sectors of art and learning. There are political purists who reject reform as a palliative that will only delay the cleansing fires of the revolution, classicists who see only cultural decline since Homer. It is possible to sympathize with such purists; they often serve as a conscience to humankind. But human beings are just as often ill-served by them—people are not at their best when motivated by guilt or alarm. If not actually paralyzed, they act mulishly, dutifully, without the joy and playfulness that liberate the imagination and start the flow of creative thought.

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Still, we cannot escape the awkward question: is the restored prairie a fake? I have heard it said by one skeptic that to have a restored coastline instead of a "natural" one is as if a museum's Vermeer were removed and secretly replaced by a perfect replica. One is ultimately as shortchanged by the copy of nature as one would be by the copy of the work of art. A large part of the value of nature, as with a Vermeer, is that it is the original; that is, its value depends on its origins.

A plausible and widely held idea, or *ideal*. Behind it, perhaps, we can glimpse the notion, fundamentally theological, that the world is a creation, and inferior to its creator. And underlying this notion there is, perhaps, that basic Indo-European habit of thought—a *human* habit of thought—that derives the nature of the child from the nature of the parent, and thus insists on the inferiority and subordination of child to parent. The very word "nature" is derived from an ancient Indo-European root meaning "birth," a root sounding like "gand," and giving rise also to such words as "natal," "native," "natural," and "nativity" on one branch; "gender," "genus," "generate," "general," "genital," "gentle," "gene," and "generation" on a second branch; and the Germanic "kin," "kind," "kindred," and "akin" on yet a third. (The very practice of etymology as a pedantic explanation of the meaning of a word implicitly privileges origins as determinative of outcomes.)

In reproducing a prairie, the ecological restorationists do but take a leaf out of nature's book. Nature itself copies

But is not the true role of the parent to educate the child to the point where it becomes independent of its origins and capable of creation beyond its parents' dreams? The American Revolution was a declaration of such independence from the motherland, the fatherland. And though there is one wisdom that says that we know a thing by its origins, there is another that says "by their fruits ye shall know them"—that is, we derive the identity of something not from what produced it but from *what it produces*. The kingdom of heaven may be more like a mustard seed, like a leaven or ferment, than like an achieved perfection; more in potential than in exhaustion of possibility. The branching tree of evolution brings about wonderfully new forms of life, unpredictable from their origins, or "predictable" only after they have actually appeared.

Perhaps we should compare a living landscape not with a Vermeer, but with a sonnet, which, far from losing beauty and meaning when copied, derives its very life from being printed and reprinted. Shakespeare has a sonnet that says just this:

> Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
> But sad mortality o'ersways their power,
> How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
> Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
> O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
> Against the wrackful siege of batt'ring days,
> When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
> Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays?
> O fearful meditation! Where, alack,
> Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
> Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back?
> Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
> O none, unless this miracle have might,
> That in black ink my love shall still shine bright.

And it still does, unspotted by the centuries, precisely because it has been copied and recopied in "black ink"; precisely because it has taken on the ethic of the fruit and the seed, which is to give all to the future.

The analogy is a rather precise one. A landscape is not at all like a Vermeer, if by that we mean it is the same landscape year to year as a Vermeer is the same painting year by year. (And is a Vermeer forever the same?) A prairie recopies, reprints itself every spring, using seeds and shoots that are the books wherein are inscribed the instructions of the DNA code. I would say that a prairie is like the renewing vision of the world that Vermeer began in our culture, that tradition of the revelatory power of light that is reborn in us every time we see a girl in a room lit by a tall window.

In reproducing a prairie, then, the ecological restorationists do but take a leaf out of nature's book. Nature itself copies; it is an *uncopied* prairie, if such could exist, that would be unnatural. When the retreat of icecaps, the silting up of lakebeds, or devastation by volcanic ash lays bare a new environment suitable for prairie, the prairie species are seeded by natural vectors—wind, birds, insects—and copy themselves onto the empty page. Is not *Homo sapiens* in this case just another vector that the prairie biome employs to reproduce itself? A flower uses the aesthetic preferences of the bee to attract its pollinator; likewise our aesthetic attraction for the prairie causes us to carry its germs to a new environment.

But perhaps even this conception is too conservative. It is the job of the scholar to ensure that the sonnet remains utterly uncorrupted by copying or printers' errors; but nature's copying is not exact. Though the copying process is entirely natural—and thus the preservationists' argument against the "fake" is without substance—nature itself goes beyond copying to innovation, and allows copying "errors" into its sonnets in an attempt to improve them.

Let us be precise about this. Prairie grass can propagate in one of two ways: by cloning itself with runners or rhizomes or by mating and sexual reproduction, using flowers, fruits, and seeds. When it sends out a new shoot, whether vertical, parallel to the ground or under it, every biomolecular precaution is taken that the DNA in the new cells is identical to that in the originals. Redundancies in the code, periodic checks for exact matching in the complementary nucleic strands, and an immune system on guard against cancerous or virus-induced revisions of the code—all protect the integrity of the copy. But when a plant reproduces itself sexually, the policy is utterly changed. The twin strands of the chromosomes are separated from each other, the naked strands are paired with those of an alien individual, the genes are chopped up and reshuffled, the copies are conflated and thus corrupted.

What is sex for? It's for one purpose: variation. It is to create true genetic individuals

What is sex for? Why should plants go to the extraordinary expense of complex energy-using reproductive systems—flowers and fruit and the rest—when they could simply use their built-in growth system and bud themselves a clone? It's all for one purpose: variation. To put this more precisely, it is to create true genetic individuals. And the function of individuals is to act as experimental tests of various possibilities in body conformation, chemistry, and behavior that fall within the range of variation for the species. If the individual survives to reproduce, then its particular traits are perpetuated in the gene pool of the species. If it reproduces itself more abundantly than its parents, then it has probably found a better fit to the vicissitudes of its environment. In biological terms, the offspring can better represent its species than the parent. What this means is that, at least when dealing with the phenomenon of life and all phenomena derived from it (culture, technological development, religion, history, etc.), we must allow for the possibility that we can only understand something truly by knowing its future, its fruits, its consequences.

Even more revolutionary is the implication that the injunction to know things by their fruits and not only their origins might also apply to the inorganic world of physics and chemistry. The physical universe itself should then be characterized as a life-producing universe. "Life-producingness," to follow this logic, is an essential trait of that "species" we call the universe. This is a version of what physicists call the Anthropic Principle, which stipulates that one of the constraints on the initial state of the cosmos was that it should be the kind of cosmos that could bring about through evolution observers of it that could confirm its existence and compel it to actualize itself by being observed. Quantum theory treats reality as a product of both whatever is "out there"—in itself only a probability—and the act of observation or registering that forces the probability to collapse into actuality. Without observers no universe can exist. We are a far cry here from the ideas of the purists, who want us to leave Nature alone and who deplore the corruptions of human reflexiveness.

But let us press on and see where the argument takes us. Our meditation upon flowers is not yet over; for variation by sexual recombination, which is the function of flowers, is not enough by itself to keep the breed adaptively abreast of its competition. Another element is required, and that is death. If death does not cull out of the species those individuals whose genes are not adapted to the environment, the defective genes themselves will remain to contaminate the more vigorous strains. It may seem paradoxical to describe death—which is after all the opposite of survival—as a tool in the process of evolution, whose mainspring is survival. But this is exactly the magnificently risky policy to which the sexually reproducing organisms have committed themselves. Most sexual organisms even contain a programmed aging system on the cellular or genetic level to ensure that the individual does not outstay its time. Sex and death; the two great forces at work.

Aging, though, is not enough in many cases to clean out the deadwood of genetic failure. Many species rely on their predators to cull the unfit,

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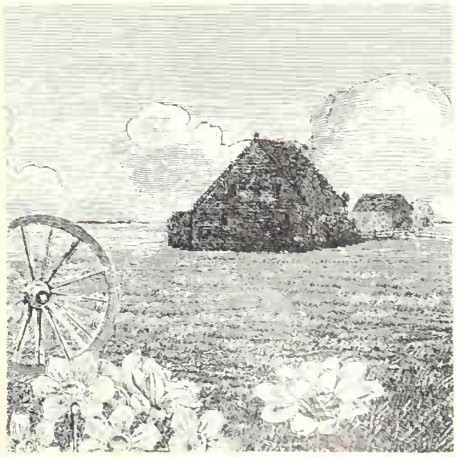
and if this kind of "death" is no longer available for some reason, the system begins to break down. An example: the deer population of the Wisconsin arboretum recently began to exceed the capacity of the land; in the long run such an unchecked population explosion would endanger the genetic vigor of the herd. The effects of overpopulation unlimited by predation are similar to the effects of incest and inbreeding in a human community: individuals are born feebler, more susceptible to hereditary diseases, and sometimes even deformed. The arboretum prepared to shoot some of the deer to relieve the population pressure.

But then what some park managers call the "Bambi syndrome" set in. Public outcry against the deer kill was overwhelming, and the arboretum was forced to call it off. (This phenomenon is not confined to Wisconsin. Recently there was so much fuss about the deer kill at a national zoological park in Maryland that congressional hearings were held, with the result that federal money was appropriated to evacuate the deer and build a ten-foot steel fence around the park to keep them from coming back. Democracy is a beautiful thing.)

But not even predators are enough to keep an ecosystem balanced. The old prairies were dependent on periodic fires to clear the thatch, fertilize the soil, and above all to kill the tree saplings that would otherwise quickly cover the ground. The richest mix of species occurs only on burnt prairies. Before the settlers came, a prairie fire could burn all the way from Illinois to the banks of the Wabash. As William R. Jordan, the editor of *Restoration & Management Notes*, once told me, "Remove the fires caused by lightning or set by Indians, and you have to replace them, or the prairie will quietly vanish, not in a roar of machinery, but into the shadows of a forest." Accordingly, the Wisconsin arboretum burns its prairies—every two years at first, but now more *irregularly*, as nature might. It is said to be an unforgettable sight, with flames leaping up thirty feet, and it is gradually taking on the status of a ritual for the professionals and volunteers who set and manage the fire. I myself can remember from my childhood in central Africa the spring burning practiced by the Ndembu tribe, and the air of festival it conveyed; it is associated for me with the smell of grass smoke, harsh native honey beer, the hunters' rites and dances, and the delicious little ground-fruits that we village boys would find among the burnt grass roots. Perhaps one day prairie burning will be one of the great ritual occasions of the Midwest, a sort of festival of Dionysus, the god of inexhaustible life—an occasion for drama, music, poetry, and storytelling.



It is remarkable how passionate the true prairie restorationists are on the subject of burning. The discovery of the need to burn, I believe, emancipated the naturalist; burning can even be seen as a sacrificial rite of redemption for our ecological guilt. The patient, careful labor of copying the natural prairie called for the medieval virtues—humility and obedience to nature, poverty and chastity of the imagination, sensitivity, self-abnegation, self-effacement. Burning showed that nature needed us, needed even those most Promethean and destructive elements of ourselves symbolized by fire.

Let us approach ecological restoration—its value, its moral necessity, its *naturalness*—from another angle. In a very different field of endeavor, the search for extraterrestrial intelligence, a shocking conclusion is beginning to suggest itself, catalyzed by the awkward question blurted out a few years ago at a conference of astronomers: "Where is everybody?" Given the sensitivity of our signal-detection instruments, the ease with which radio signals can be propagated to great distances, the huge number of planetary systems within probable range of us, and the certainty that any other technological civilization must be employing radio frequencies for communication, the airwaves should be filled with interstellar chatter. Instead, the silence is deafening. There is no sign that *anyone* is out there. And the moment one begins to think about this fact, it appears more and more

plausible that we are alone in the universe. For instance, it is now generally accepted that the universe is only about twelve to twenty billion years old, but estimates of how long it will remain in existence in such a form as to support life range well over a hundred *trillion* years. In other words, the universe has seen only a tiny fraction of its existence; it is brand new. Why should we not be the first? There has to be a first.

And consider this: given the present age of the universe, there has only just been enough time, under the most favorable conditions, for us to have evolved. First, the universe had to cool enough to make possible ordinary stars. Then there had to have been at least one previous generation of stars—having lived out its life cycle, burned up its nuclear fuel, collapsed, and then exploded—to have produced the heavy-element ash out of which our own solar system is made and without which no likely form of life could exist. Then the solar system had to form. Almost immediately after the earth cooled down enough to support life, the first living organisms appeared, about four billion years ago, perhaps less than ten billion years after the Big Bang. Earthly life has been around for nearly a third of the universe's history. And yet all that time was needed for life to transform the atmosphere from a methane–nitrogen–water vapor–hydrogen sulfide–ammonia one to a nitrogen-oxygen one, and to graduate from the very slow evolution of asexual organisms to the rapid evolution of sexual ones and the still more rapid evolution of social animals, whose communities can, to an extent, evolve themselves. It would be hard to imagine a faster evolutionary scenario than the one that brought us into being on this planet.

If we are alone, then we carry a gigantic responsibility. We are the custodians of life in the universe, and the only plausible vector by which life may propagate itself to other worlds and thus escape the risk that some minor cosmic accident—the impact of a stray asteroid, or a disturbance of the sun's activity—should snuff forever out the first shoots of life. It is becoming clear that we cannot survive, psychologically or physically, without the rich web of other lives around us. If we leave this planet we must take our biosphere with us.

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The great class of the angiosperms—the flowering plants that appeared in the mid-Cretaceous period and came in a mere five million years to dominate the ecology of the planet—owes its very existence to its insect assistants and the new ecological niches they opened up. The simultaneous explosion of land vertebrates, of which we are one, may in turn be due to the richer carbohydrate and protein content of angiosperm seeds and fruits. The work of the bee and the bird in spreading angiosperm pollen and seed across the continents was not merely a conserving activity. Rather, it actively promoted the creation of new habitats and ecologically richer regimes. The ecological restorationists are taking the first step toward being able to reconstitute on some alien soil the elements of an earthly forest or prairie. Their distant successors will be like the bees, serving as the gentle pander and reproductive vector of other species—participant-gardeners of nature.

At present the restorationist bee is more necessary as a preserver than as a colonist; and the restorationist ethic is, as I have pointed out, mostly one of medieval self-effacement. This is as it should be. But the time may come when we, and our sister species of this planet, may seed ourselves across the solar system and beyond, as once the pelagic species colonized the land, and the insects and the birds the air. The task will be enormous, and will be too much for the relatively slow and unreflective processes of genetic adaption. Who will write the *Georgics* of this new Arcadia? It will take wise bees, seed vectors of great exactness—forces able to provide the right environment for infant growth until the growth itself has altered those harsh environments into something hospitable to human beings. But one day the long discipline of restoration may bear a strange and unexpected fruit, and an alien sun may shine on miles of blowing prairie. ■

A GRIM OBLIGATION THA

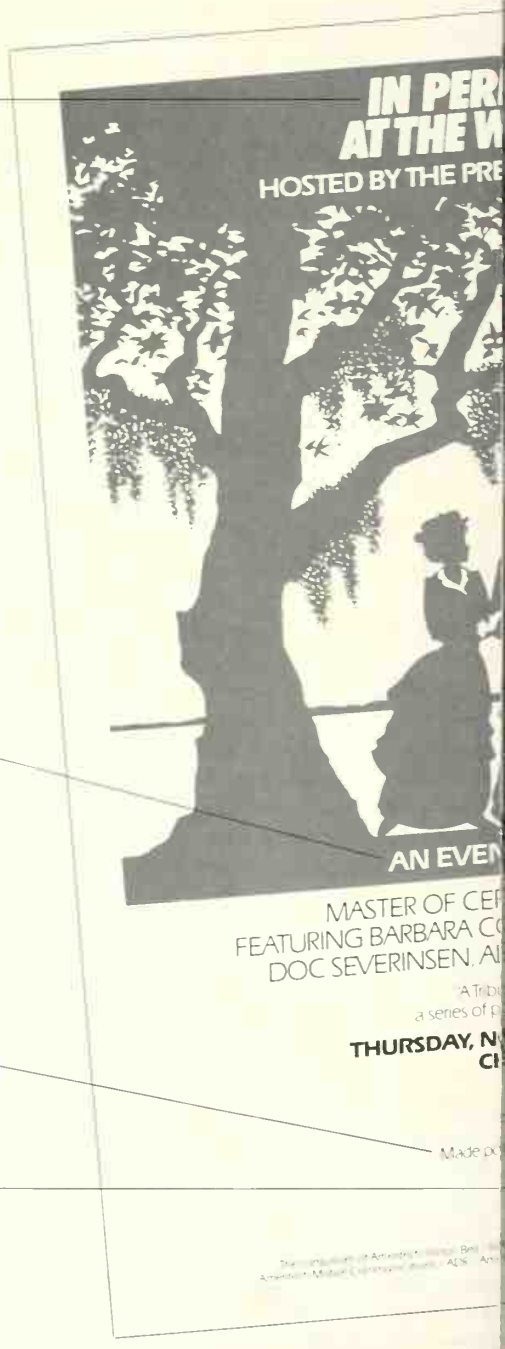
An evening with Ron, Nancy,

This advertisement uses an alphabet in which all the letters are a kind of A. One is allowed to associate the figures in silhouette with the Reagans. They seem to be walking on Jerome Kern, who has been made into a sidewalk. We do not know how to present Jerome Kern or how to enjoy him. What we do know is that he stands high in the American world of pleasure. So do the Reagans. For a long time all we wanted was a hit—a new letter A. Now we need *A-B-C* all in a row, to show we know how to do that. In our hearts, we are uncomfortable with *A-B-C* and want *A* only. The only narrative we like is one of successes. The equation is $A+B+C=A+A^1+A^2$.

The atmosphere is that of a high-school entertainment in which everyone has failed, no one knows how to do it, and we have been forced to turn to the classmate we have never really liked for a *little* of what he can do. With what reluctance (in our hearts) do we do it. Secretly we want a giant rock-and-roll star, and we want him kissing our hand *now*. And at the White House, among hosts and guests alike, a horrible thought: this man (Jerome Kern) occupies a place in the hierarchy of show business to which we cannot possibly aspire. We give up our *hit*, and in return we are asked to feel puny! No wonder the event is funereal—there is reminiscing, but no one gives up his footing in the present. The sadness is not that the Kennedys had Casals, and that *that* is high art and this is not. It is sad because it is a wake.

No. It was made possible by *Jerome Kern*.

No, no. You're a socially ambitious phone company, and to expropriate a simple, uncatchy phrase like "Helping you communicate"—to try to *own* it—is an offense to anyone who has ever opened his mouth to speak.



George W. S. Trow writes for the New Yorker.

IGHT BE MADE TO WORK

and Bob, *by George W. S. Trow*

The form of "hosting" is Bob Hope's, a form in which the focus is on Bob giving you something that is already yours: Christmas, autumn, a war—something that *you didn't sufficiently value* and wouldn't know how to use if Bob didn't show you.

The cast: also Bob Hope. The formula: Miss America, the L. A. Rams, a big star Bob doesn't like, a smaller star he knows socially. "Just show up" is all Bob asks of his stars, his audience too. He has created a ritual for a society with no rituals, ideally suited for presentation in some nonce context. The Hope formula is now used whenever one senses a grim obligation which might be made to work. White House + Reagans + Kern + Hamlisch = Christmas on a battleship.

Of course we must approach Jerome Kern through layers of gauze so that we do not immediately come upon the full man, the fact of his personality. But can it be that we are entering some new phase of shyness in which we act out of fear that we have given up, not only our culture (which we gave up first of all to have a better time, which we are not having), but also our enthusiasm about power? I don't mean our attraction to power, that is greater than ever, but the half-baked satisfaction that said, "I'm a GM man"—a half-baked remark that sounded the death of culture, but did represent a kind of *civic* culture defined as half geography (America, Detroit) and half *working with big tools* (the corporation as specific work). Perhaps we have now entered the culture of Ameritech. Half Illinois Bell (a state and an inventor), half Ameritech Services, "Helping you to forget our name—and your own."

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HSA 8

WHO WON THE WEST?

Apologies to the water birds and ranch hands

By William Kittredge

After a half mile in soft rain on the slick hay-field stubble, I would crouch behind the levee and listen to the gentle clatter of the water birds, and surprise them into flight—maybe a half-dozen mallard hens and three green-headed drakes lifting in silhouetted loveliness against the November twilight, hanging only yards from the end of my shotgun. This was called jump shooting or meat hunting, and it almost always worked. But I wish someone had told me reasons you should not necessarily kill the birds every time. I wish I'd been told to kill ducks maybe only once or twice a winter, for a fine meal with children and friends, and that nine times out of ten I was going to be happier if I let the goddamned birds fly away.

In 1959, on the MC Ranch, in the high desert country of southeastern Oregon, an agricultural property my family owned, I was twenty-seven, prideful with a young man's ambition, and happy as such a creature can be, centered in the world of my upbringing, king of my mountain, and certain I was deep into the management of perfection. It was my responsibility to run a ranch-hand cookhouse and supervise the labors of from ten to twenty-five workingmen. Or, to put it most crudely, as was often done, "hire and fire and work the winos."

Think of it as a skill, learnable as any other. In any profession there are rules, the most basic being enlightened self-interest. Take care of your men and they will take care of you.

And understand their frailties, because you are the one responsible for taking care. Will they fall sick to death in the bunkhouse, and is there someone you can call to administer mercy if they do? What attention will you give them as they die?

Some thirty-six miles west of our valley, over the Warner Mountains in the small lumbering and ranching town of Lakeview, a workingman's hotel functioned as a sort of hiring hall. There was a rule of thumb about the men you would find there. The best of them wore a good pair of boots laced up tight over wool socks; this meant they were looking for a laboring job. The most hapless would be wearing low-cut city shoes, no socks, no laces. They were looking for a place to hide, and never to be hired. It was a rule that worked.

On bright afternoons when my people were scrambling to survive in the Great Depression, my mother was young and fresh as she led me on walks along the crumbling small-town streets of Malin, Oregon, in the Klamath Basin just north of the California border. This was before we moved to the MC Ranch; I was three years old and understood the world as concentric circles of diminishing glory centered on the sun of her smile. Outside our tight circle was my father, an energetic stranger who came home at night and before he touched anything, even me or my mother, rolled up his sleeves over his white forearms and scrubbed his hands in the kitchen sink with coarse lava soap. Out beyond him were the turkey herders, and beyond them lay the vast agricultural world, on the fringes of the Tule Lake Reclamation District, where they worked.

What the herders did in the turkey business, as it was run by my father, was haul crates full of turkeys around on old flatbed trucks. When they got to the backside of some farm property

William Kittredge's most recent book is Owning It All, *published by Greywolf Press.*

No doubt my horror of turkeys had much to do with my fear of the men who herded them

where nobody was likely to notice, they parked and opened the doors on those crates and turned the turkeys out to roam and feed on grasshoppers. Sometimes they had permission, sometimes my father had paid a fee; and some of the time it was theft, grazing the turkeys for free. Sometimes they got caught, and my father paid the fee then. And once in a while they had to reload the turkeys into their crates and move on while some farmer watched with a shotgun.

The barnyard turkey, you have to understand, is a captive, bitter creature. (Some part of our alienation, when we are most isolated, is ecological. We are lonely and long to share in what we regard as the dignity of wild animals—this is the phantom so many of us pursue as we hunt, complicating the actual killing into a double-bind sort of triumph.) My upbringing taught me to consider the domesticated turkey a rapacious creature, eyes dull with the opaque gleam of pure selfishness, without soul. I had never heard of a wild one. The most recent time I had occasion to confront turkeys up close was in the fall of 1987, driving red scoria roads in the North Dakota badlands. I came across farmstead turkeys, and true or not, I took that as a sign we were where agriculture meant subsistence. No doubt my horror of turkeys had much to do with my fear of the men who herded them.

From the windows of our single-bedroom apartment on the second floor of the only brick building in Malin, where I slept on a little bed in the living room, we could look south across the rich irrigated potato- and barley-raising country of the Tule Lake basin and see to California and the lava-field badlands where the Modoc Indians had hidden out from the U.S. Army in the long-ago days of their rebellion. I wonder if my mother told me stories of those Indians in their caves, and doubt it, but not because she didn't believe in the arts of make-believe. It's just that my mother would have told me [illegible] stories. She grew up loving opera. My grandfather, as I will always understand him, even though we were not connected by blood, earned the money for her music lessons as a blacksmith for the California/Oregon Power Company in Klamath Falls—sharpening steel, as he put it. So it is unlikely my mother was fond of stories about desperate natives and hold-out killings and the eventual hanging of Captain Jack, the Modoc war chief, at Fort Klamath. That was just the sort of nastiness she was interested in escaping; and besides, we were holding to defensive actions of our own.

After all, my father was raising turkeys for a living in a most haphazard fashion. So my mother told me stories about Christmas as perfection realized: candied apples glowing in the light of an intricately decorated tree, and a little toy railroad which tooted and circled the room as if the room were the world.

But we live in a place more complex than paradise, some would say richer, and I want to tell a story about my terror on Christmas Eve, and the way we were happy anyhow. The trouble began on a sunny afternoon with a little snow on the ground, when my mother took me for my first barbershop haircut, a step into manhood as she defined it. I was enjoying the notion of such ceremony and even the snipping of the barber's gentle shears as I sat elevated to manly height by the board across the arms of his chair—until Santa Claus came in, jerked off his cap and the fringe of snowy hair and his equally snowy beard, and stood revealed as an unshaven man in a Santa Claus suit who looked like he could stand a drink from the way his hands were shaking.

The man leered at my kindly barber and muttered something. I suppose he wanted to know how long he would have to wait for a shave. Maybe he had been waiting all day for a barbershop shave. A fine, brave, hung over sort of waiting, all the while entombed in that Santa Claus suit. I screamed. I like to think I was screaming against chaos, in defense of my mother and notions of a proper Christmas, and maybe because our Santa Claus who was not a

Illustrations by Greg Vorl

Santa, with his corded, unshaven neck, even looked remotely like a turkey as this story turns edgy and nightmarish.

My father's turkeys had been slaughtered the week before Thanksgiving in a couple of boxcars pulled onto a siding in Tule Lake, and shipped to markets in the East. Everyone was at liberty and making ready to ride out winter on whatever he had managed to accumulate. So the party my parents threw on the night before Christmas had ancient ceremonial resonances. The harvest was done, the turkeys were slaughtered, and the dead season of cold winds was at hand. It was a time of release into meditation and winter, to await rebirth.

But it was not a children's party. It is difficult to imagine my father at a children's party. As I recall from this distance it was a party for the turkey herders, those men who had helped my father conspire his way through that humiliating summer with those terrible creatures. At least the faces I see in my dream of that yellow kitchen are the faces of those men. Never again, my mother said, and my father agreed; better times were coming and everybody got drunk.

I had been put down to sleep on the big bed in my parents' bedroom, which was quite a privilege in itself, and it was only late in the night that I woke to a sense of something gone wrong. The sacred place where I lived with my mother had been invaded by loud laughter and hoedown harmonica music and people dancing and stomping. As I stood in the doorway looking into the kitchen in my pajamas, nobody saw me for a long moment—until I began my hysterical momma's-boy shrieking.

The harmonica playing stopped, and my mother looked shamefaced toward me from the middle of the room, where she had been dancing with my father while everyone watched. All those faces of people who are now mostly dead turned to me, and it was as if I had gotten up and come out of the bedroom into the actuality of a leering nightmare, vivid light and whiskey bottles on the table and those faces glazed with grotesque intentions.

Someone saved it, one of the men, maybe even my father, by picking me up and ignoring my wailing as the harmonica music started again, and then I was in my mother's arms as she danced, whirling around the kitchen table and the center of all attention in a world where everything was possible and good, while the turkey herders watched and smiled and thought their private thoughts, and it was Christmas at last in my mother's arms, as I have understood it ever since.

For years the faces of the turkey herders in their otherness, in that bright kitchen, were part of a dream I dreaded as I tried to go to sleep. In struggling against the otherness of the turkey herders I made a start toward indifference to the disenfranchised. I was learning to inhabit distance, from myself and people I should have cared for.

In struggling against the otherness of the turkey herders I was learning to inhabit distance, from myself and people I should have cared for

A couple of years later my family moved the hundred miles east to the MC Ranch. My grandfather got the place when he was sixty-two years old, pledging everything he had worked for all his life, unable to resist owning such a kingdom. The move represented an enormous change in our fortunes.

Warner Valley is that place which is sacred to me as the main staging ground for my imagination. I see it as an inhabited landscape where the names of people remind me of places, and the places remind me of what happened there—a thicket of stories to catch the mind if it might be falling.

It was during the Second World War that wildlife biologists from up at the college in Corvallis told my father the sandhill cranes migrating through Warner were rare and vanishing creatures, to be cherished with the same intensity as the ring-necked Manchurian pheasants, which had been imported from the hinterlands of China. The nests of sandhill cranes, with their large off-white speckled eggs, were to be regarded as absolutely precious. "No matter what," I heard my father say, "you don't break those eggs."

My father was talking to a tall, gray-faced man named Clyde Bolton, who was stuck with a day of riding a drag made of heavy timbers across Thompson Field, breaking up cow shit in the early spring before the irrigating started, so the chips wouldn't plug up the John Deere mowing machines come summer and haying. Clyde was married to Ada Bolton, the indispensable woman who cooked and kept house for us, and he had a damaged heart which kept him from heavy work. He milked the three or four cows my father kept, and tended the chickens and the house garden, and took naps in the afternoon. He hadn't hired out for field work, and he was unhappy.

But help was scarce during those years when so many of the able bodied were gone to the war, and there he was, take it or leave it. And anyway, riding that drag wouldn't hurt even a man with a damaged heart. Clyde was a little spoiled—that's what we used to say. Go easy on the hired help long enough, and they will sour on you. A man, we would say, needs to get out in the open air and sweat and blow off the stink.

This was a Saturday morning in April after the frost had gone out, and I was a boy learning the methodologies of field work. The cranes'

I wish my father had passed along some detailed notion of how to be boss

nests my father was talking about were hidden down along unmowed margins—in the yellow remnants of knee-high meadow grass from the summer before, along the willow-lined sloughs through the home fields. "The ones the coons don't get," my father said.

I can see my father's gray-eyed good humor and his stockman's fedora pushed back on his head as he studied Clyde, and hear the ironic rasp in his voice. At that time my father was more than ten years younger than I am now, a man recently come to the center of his world. And I can see Clyde Bolton hitching his suspenders and snorting over the idea of keeping an eye out for the nest of some sandhill crane. I can see his disdain.

This going out with Clyde was as close to any formal initiation as I ever got on the ranch. There really wasn't much of anything for me to do, but it was important I get used to the idea of working on days when I was not in school. It wouldn't hurt a damned bit. A boy should learn to help out where he can, and I knew it, so I was struggling to harness the old team of matched bay geldings, Dick and Dan, and my father and Clyde were not offering to help because a boy would never make a man if you helped him all the time.

"You see what you think out there," my father said, and he spoke to Clyde seriously, man to man, ignoring me. They were deeply serious all at once and absorbed into what I understood as the secret lives of men. It was important to watch them for clues.

My father acted like he was just beginning to detail Clyde's real assignment. You might have thought we faced a mindless day spent riding that drag behind a farting old team. But no, it seemed Clyde's real mission involved a survey of conditions, and experienced judgment.

"Them swales been coming to swamp grass," my father said. "We been drowning them out." He went on to talk about the low manure dams which spread irrigation water across the swales. Clyde would have the day to study those dams, and figure where they should be relocated.

Once we believed work done well would see us through. But it was not true. Once it seemed the rewards of labor would be naturally rationed out with at least a rough kind of justice. But we were unlettered and uninstructed in the true nature of our ultimate values. Our deep willingness to trust in our native goodness was not enough.

But we tried. This is what I am writing of here, that trying and also about learning to practice hardening of the heart. Even back then I might have suspected my father wasn't much worried about swamp grass in the swales, and that Clyde Bolton knew he wasn't, and that it wasn't the point of their negotiations. My father was concerned about dignity, however fragile, as an ultimate value.

"Your father was the damnedest son of a bitch," one of the ranch hands once told me. "He'd get you started on one thing, and make you think you were doing another thing which was more important, and then he would go off and you wouldn't see him for days, and pretty soon it was like you were working on your own place."

It was not until I was a man in the job my father perfected that I learned the sandhill cranes were not endangered at all. It didn't matter. Those birds were exotic and lovely as they danced their mating dances in our meadows, each circling the other with gawky tall-bird elegance, balanced by their extended fluttering wings as they seized the impulse and looped across the meadows with their long necks extended to the sky and their beaks open to whatever ecstasy birds can know. I think my father was simply trying to teach me and everyone else on the property that certain vulnerabilities should be cherished and protected at whatever inconvenience.

I have to wish there had been more such instruction, and that it had been closer to explicit in a philosophical sense. Most of all I wish my father had passed along some detailed notion of how to be boss. It was a thing he seemed to do naturally. I wish he had made clear to me the dangers of posturing in front of people who are in some degree dependent on your whims, posturing until you have got yourself deep into the fraud of maintaining distance and mystery in place of authenticity.

A man once told me to smoke cigars. "They see you peel that cellophane," he said, "and they know you don't live like they do."

My father set up the Grain Camp on a sagebrush hill slope, beneath a natural spring on the west side of Warner Valley. And it was an encampment, short on every amenity except running water in the early days—a double row of one-room shacks, eight in all, trucked in from a nearby logging camp abandoned in the late 1930s. There were also two shacks tacked across one another in a T shape to make a cookhouse, one cabin for the cooking and another for the long table where everyone ate.

The men, who lived two to a cabin in the busy seasons, sweltering on that unshaded hill slope in the summers, and waking in the night to the stink of drying work clothes as they fed split wood to their little stoves in the winter, were a mix of transients and what we called homesteaders, men who stayed with us for more

than an occasional season, often years in the same cabin, which became known as theirs. Those men have my heart as I write this, men who were my friends and my mentors, some of whom died at the Grain Camp and have been inconspicuously dead for many years. Louie Hanson, Vance Beebe, Jake O'Rourke, Lee Mallard, so many others. I would like the saying of their names to be an act of pure celebration.

When I came home from the air force in the fall of 1957, I was twenty-five years old and back to beginnings after most of eight years away, a woeful figure from American mythology, the boss's kid and heir to the property, soon to inherit, who didn't know anything. Then in the spring of 1958, the myth came directly home to roost. I found myself boss at the Grain Camp.

There was no choice but to plead ignorance and insinuate myself into the sympathies of the old hands. Ceremony demanded that I show up twice a day to sit at the head of the long table for meals, breakfast and noon, and in the course of those appearances negotiate my way through the intricacies of managing 8,000 acres of irrigated land. For a long time I was bluffing, playing a hand I didn't understand, risking disgrace and reaping it plenty enough. The man who saved my bacon mostly was an old alcoholic Swede in filthy coveralls named Louie Hanson, who sat at my right hand at the table.

About five-thirty on a routine morning, after a hot shower and instant coffee, I would drive the three or so miles from the house to the Grain Camp. The best cabin, walls filled with sawdust for insulation, belonged to Louie. He had worked for my father since our beginnings in Warner, hiring out in 1937 to build dikes with a secondhand Caterpillar RD–6, the first tracklayer my father bought, and made his way up to Cat mechanic, and into privileges, one of which was occasional drinking. Theoretically, we didn't allow any drinking. Period. Again, there were rules. You need to drink, go to town. Maybe your job will be waiting when you get back. Unless you were one of the old hands. Then your job was secure. But nobody was secure if he got to drinking on the job, or around camp.

Except for Louie. Every morning in winter he would go down to the Cat shop to build his fire before breakfast, and dig a couple of beers from one of the bolt-rack cubbyholes, pop the tops, and set the bottles on the stove to heat. When they were steaming he would take them off, drink the beer in a few long draughts, and be set to seize the day.

So it would not be an entirely sober man I greeted when I came early to get him for breakfast and knocked on the door to his cabin. Louie would be resting back on the greasy tarp that covered his bed, squinting through the smoke from another Camel, sipping coffee from a filthy cup and looking up to grin. "Hell, you own the place," he would say, "you're in."

Louie would blink his eyes. "Chee-rist. You got enough water in Dodson Lake?" He was talking about one of the huge grain fields we flooded every spring. And I wouldn't know. Did I have enough water in Dodson Lake? Louie would look at me directly. "Get a south wind and you are going to lose some dikes." I knew what that meant: eroded levee banks, washouts, catastrophe, 450 acres of flooded alfalfa.

Up at the breakfast table, while Louie reached for the pounded round steak, I would detail a couple of men to start drawing down the water in Dodson Lake, a process involving the opening of huge valves, pulling headgate boards, running the eighteen-inch pump. All of which would have been unnecessary if I had known what I was doing in the first place. Which everybody knew and nobody mentioned. All in all a cheap mistake, easily covered—wages for the men and electricity to run the pump, wasted time and a little money, maybe a couple hundred bucks. Without Louie's intercession, maybe twenty thousand.

There was no choice but to plead ignorance and insinuate myself into the sympathies of the old hands

The deeply fearful are driven to righteousness, as we know, and they are the most fearsome fools we have. This is a story I have told as a tavern-table anecdote, in which I call our man the Murderer, since I have no memory of his real name. Call the story "The Day I Fired the Murderer." It is designed, as told in taverns, to make me appear winsome and ironic, liberated, guilty no more. Which of course implies there was guilt. And there was, in a way that cornered me into thinking it was anger that drove me, and that my anger was mostly justifiable.

I had been boss at the Grain Camp for four or five years, and I had come to understand myself as a young man doing good work, employing the otherwise unemployable (which was kind of true), and also as someone whose efforts were continually confounded by the incompetence of the men who worked for me. We were farming twenty-four hours a day through early May while the Canada honkers hatched their downy young and the tulips pushed up through the crusted flower beds and the Lombardy poplar broke their buds and the forsythia bloomed lurid yellow against the cookhouse wall. But I don't think of such glories when I remember those spring mornings. I remember the odor of dank peat turning up behind those disc Cats as we went on farming twenty-four hours a day, and how much I loved breaking ground.

I was the ice queen, which means no stories, please, there is no forgiveness for you

Before sunrise on those mornings I would come awake and go piss, then stand in my undershorts on the screened-in veranda attached to the house where I lived with my wife and young children. I would shiver with chill and happiness as I smelled the world coming awake. Far out across our valley the lights on our D–7 disc Cats would flicker as lights do when seen through a screen, moving almost imperceptibly. I would take my binoculars and open the screen door and gaze out to those lights as if I might catch one of my night-shift Catskinners at some dog-fuckery, but really all I wanted to see was the machinery moving. Those Cats would clank along at two or three miles an hour all through the hours of darkness, turning a thirty-six-foot swath—a hundred acres every night and another hundred acres on the day shift. The upturned soil would mellow in the air for a day, and then we would harrow it and seal it with dust and drill it to barley. In ten days or so the seedlings would break earth, and those orderly drill-rows undulating over the tilled ground toward the sundown light were softly yellow-green and something alive I had seen to completion.

It came to a couple hundred acres of barley every day for fifteen days, three-thousand-some-odd acres in all. By the end of harvest in late September, at roughly a ton per acre, that came to 3,000 tons of barley at $50 a ton, or $150,000, real money in the early 1960s in our end of the world.

We drained the wetlands and thought that made them ours. We believed the world was made to be useful; we ditched and named the intersections of our ditches: Four Corners, Big Pump, Center Bridge, Beatty Bridge. We thought such naming made the valley ours.

And we thought the people were ours.

The man I call the Murderer was one of those men who rode the disc Cats, circling toward the sunrise. My involvement with him that spring had started the previous fall, when someone from the Oregon Board of Parole called and asked if we would participate in what they called their Custody Release Program. They would send us a parolee if we would guarantee a job; in return we got an employee who was forbidden to drink or quit, on penalty of being sent back to prison. If there was "anything," we could call and the State Police would come take him away. It seemed like a correct idea; it had been twenty some years since the Murderer killed his wife in an act of drunken bewilderment he couldn't recall.

Frail and dark-eyed in a stiff new evergreen-colored workshirt, with the sleeves rolled to expose thin white arms, pensive and bruised and looking incapable of much beyond remorse, the Murderer spent the winter feeding bales to the drag at our feed mill, a cold, filthy job, and as monotonous an enterprise as it is possible to imagine this side of automation. So when it came time to go farming in the spring, I sat him up at the controls of a D–7, taught him to pull frictions and grease the rollers and called him a Catskinner, which is to say, gave him some power. The Murderer responded by starting to talk. Bright, misinformed chatter at the breakfast table.

All I remember is annoyance. Then it rained, and we couldn't work. My crew went off to town for a couple of days with my blessing, and the Murderer went with them. That was against our rules, his and mine. And he came back drunk, and I fired him on the spot. He came up to breakfast drunk, terribly frightened and unable to be sober, lowering himself into my mercies, which did not exist.

Only in the imagination can we share another person's specific experiences. I was the ice queen, which means no stories, please, there is no forgiveness for you and never will be, just roll your goddamned bed and be gone. If I fired him, he would go back to prison. I knew that. I am sure I imagined some version of his future—isolation again in the wrecked recognition that in this life he was not to be forgiven.

Stories bind us by reminding us that our lives all participate in the same fragilities, and this should soften us so that we stay humane. But I

idn't want to be humane; I wanted to be correct. If I had not ignored his devastation as I no oubt saw it, imagined it, I might have found a ray to honor common sense and taken him ridng around with me that day as he sobered up, nd listened to his inane chatter. But I sent him own the road, and thought I was doing the ight thing. There were rules. As I tell the story mean to say, See, I am not like that anymore. See. But we know this is only another strategy.

I fired a lot of men, and Louie Hanson more han once, after on-the-job binges. But Louie vouldn't go away; he understood the true nature of our contract. I needed his assurances exactly s he needed his life at the Grain Camp. After a ew days Louie would sober up, and one mornng he would be at the breakfast table like nothng had happened. In fact he was fired the day ie died.

He was too drunk to make sense by three in he afternoon, feeding shots of whiskey to the hore man, which meant I had to take some action. So I told him to clear out. What he did vas go off to visit an old woman he had known ears before in a small town just down into California.

"A fancy woman," Louie said after drawing imself up to fine old-man lewdness. "Screw ou, I am going to see a woman I should have been seeing." He was seventy-seven years old nd unkillable so far as I knew as he drove away n his old Plymouth, squinting through his racked eyeglasses.

A stranger in a pickup truck hauled him ome late in the night, and Louie, having wrecked the Plymouth, was ruined, a cut over one eye, hallucinating as he lay curled into himself like an old knot, reeking with vomit, sick on the floor, unwilling to even open his eyes, complaining that his eyeglasses were lost. This descent into nowhere had happened before. Let him lie. And he did, facing the wall for three days.

By then it was clear something extraordinary and terrible was afoot, but Louie refused to hear of the hospital in Lakeview. They'll kill you, he said. Around the time of World War I, in the Imperial Valley of California near Calexico, his back had been broken when a bridge caved in under the weight of a steel-wheeled steam tractor. The doctors got him on morphine for the pain, and then fed him alcohol to get him off morphine, and that was it for the rest of his life, he said. Booze.

They just left me there, he would say, half drunk and grinning like it was a fine joke. Maybe he felt the doctors had already killed him. I called his son in Napa, California, who came overnight in an old car and talked Louie onto his feet, as I should have done, and into a trip over the Warner Mountains to the hospital.

All that should have been my responsibility. Days before, I should have ignored his wounded objections. The doctors wouldn't kill him, and I knew it. He would have lived some more, not for long maybe, but some more. But such obligations were a bit beyond my job description, and I fell back on excuses.

Louie Hanson died in the automobile, slumped sideways against his son—dead with a broken rib through one lung, which would have been fixable a day or so earlier. I went to the funeral but wouldn't look in the coffin. There was nothing I wanted to know about the look of things in coffins.

There had been an afternoon when I stood on a ditch bank with a dented bucket of carrot slices marinated in strychnine, poisoning badgers and dreading every moment I could foresee, all things equally unreal, my hand in the rubber glove, holding the slice of carrot which was almost luminous, clouds over Bidwell Mountain, the sound of my breathing. I would have to move soon if I was ever going to get home. I was numb with dread and sorrowed for myself because I felt nothing but terror, and I had to know this was craziness. There is no metaphor for that condition; it is precisely like nothing.

By craziness I mean nearly catatonic fearfulness generated by the conviction that nothing you do connects to any other particular thing inside your daily life. Mine was never real craziness, although some fracturing of ice seemed to lie just around the corner of each moment. It was easy to imagine vanishing into complete disorientation. My trouble could be called "paralyzed before existential realities," a condition I could name, having read Camus like any boy of my time. But such insight was useless. Nothing was valuable unless it helped toward keeping the lid on my own dis-ease.

I sent him down the road, and thought I was doing the right thing. There were rules

The Fee Point reaches into the old tule beds on the east side of Warner. A homesteader shack out there was my father's first Grain Camp cookhouse, in 1938. I see my mother at the Fee in a soft summery wind, a yellow cotton dress, a young woman on a summer day, gazing out to plow-ground fields being cut from the swamps.

Close to thirty years later my Catskinners crushed that shack into a pile of weathered gray junk lumber, dumped on the diesel, and burned it. It was January and we all warmed our hands on the flames, then drank steaming coffee and ate cold roast-beef sandwiches sent out from another cookhouse.

Maybe we should have known the world wasn't made for our purposes, to be remodeled into our idea of an agricultural paradise

In Latin *familia* means residence and family, which I take to mean community, an interconnection of stories. As I lie down to sleep I can stand out at Fee Point and see my mother and those Catskinners and the old shack burning, although I have not lived on the ranch in Warner Valley for twenty years. It's a fact of no more than sentimental interest except as an example of the ways we are inhabited by stories, and the ways they connect.

Water birds were a metaphor for abundance beyond measure in my childhood. A story about water birds: On a dour November afternoon, my father sat on a wooden case of shotgun shells in the deep tules by Pelican Lake like a crown prince of shotgunning, and dropped 123 ducks for an Elks Club feed. The birds were coming north to water from the grain fields and fighting a stiff head wind. They flared and started to settle, just over him, and they would not stop coming into the long red flame from his shotgun as darkness came down from the east. The dead birds fell collapsed to the water and washed back to shore in the wind. Eventually it was too dark to shoot, and the dead birds were heaped in the back of his pickup and he hauled them to town; he dumped them off to the woman he had hired to do the picking and went on to a good clear-hearted night at the poker table, having discharged a civic duty.

When someone had killed too many birds, their necks would be strung together with baling twine, and they would be hung from spikes in an old crab-apple tree back of our house, to freeze and be given away to anyone who might come visiting. When time came to leave, we would throw in three or four Canada honkers as a leave-taking gift, frozen and stiff as cordwood, and give you the name of the lady in town who did the picking.

What is the crime here?

It is not my father's. In later years men came to me and told me he was the finest man they ever worked for, and I envy that fineness, by which, I think, they meant fair and convivial—and just, in terms of an implied contract. From an old hand who had worked for room and board and no wages through the Great Depression, that was a kind of ultimate praise. They knew he hadn't broken any promises, and he had sense enough to know that finally you can't really help anybody die, no matter how much you owe them.

But there was an obvious string of crimes. Maybe we should have known the world wasn't made for our purposes, to be remodeled into our idea of an agricultural paradise, and that Warner Valley wasn't there to have us come along and drain the swamps, and level the peat ground into alfalfa land. No doubt we should have known the water birds would quit coming. But we had been given to understand that places we owned were to be used as we saw fit. The birds were part of all that.

What went wrong? Rules of commerce or cowardice or what? Bad thinking? Failure to identify what was sacred? All of the above? Did such failures lead me to treat men as if they were tools, to be used?

Probably. But that is no excuse for participating in the kind of cold-heartedness we see everywhere, the crime we commit while we all claim innocence.

One night in Lakeview I was dancing with a woman we all knew as the Crop Duster's Wife. She came to the taverns every night, and she was beautiful in an over-bruised sort of way, but she wouldn't go find a bed with any of us. She was, she claimed, married forever to a man who was off in Arkansas dusting cotton from an old Steerman biplane. She said she just hoped he didn't wreck that Steerman into some Arkansas church. We sat at the bar and I was drunk and started telling her about Louie Hanson and how he died, eager to confess my craziness. Maybe I thought a woman who waited for a man who flew crop-dusting aircraft would understand. Maybe I thought she would fall for a crazy man.

"There is nothing to dislike but the meanness," she said, picking at her words. "You ought to be glad you ever knew those old farts."

Failures of the sympathy, she was saying, if I read her right, originate in failures of the imagination, which is a betrayal of self. Like so many young men, I could only see myself in the mirror of a woman. Offering the utility of that reflection, and solace, was understood to be the work of women, their old job, inhabit the house and forgive, at least until they got tired of it.

In those days a woman who wanted to be done with such duties might do something like buy herself a wedding ring, and make up a story about a faraway romantic husband who flew his Steerman every morning to support her. This woman might say people like me were no cure for her loneliness. But she might excuse my self-centered sorrowing. She might say we don't have any choice, it's the creature we are. Or she might tell me to wise up and understand that sympathy can be useful only if it moves us to quit that coldness of the heart.

It is possible to imagine a story in which the Murderer does not return to prison, but lives on at the Grain Camp for years and years, until he has forgiven himself and is healed—a humorous old man you could turn to for sensible advice. In the end all of us would be able to forgive and care for ourselves. We would have learned to mostly let the birds fly away, because it is not necessarily meat we are hunting. ■

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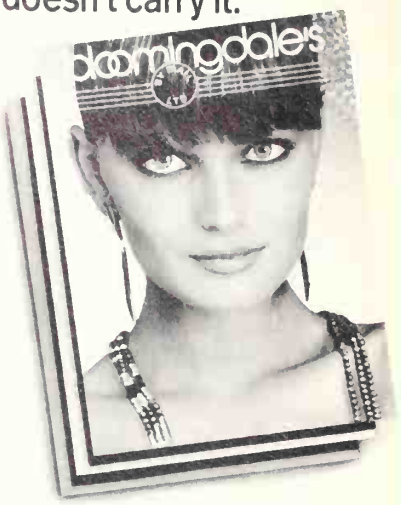

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THROUGH GRINGO EYES

With Conrad in Latin America

By Edward W. Said

Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo* is the longest and most complex of his novels. *Nostromo* is also his only extended work to treat Latin America—although like all of Conrad's most memorable writing, it derives its perspectives, characters, and themes from the experience of European imperialism, then at its apogee. To read *Nostromo* again today, as the United States tries clumsily and often brutally to impose its "narrative"—its authorship, plots, and themes—on Latin America (and elsewhere), is to come upon a truly unique earlier text, a text in which one of the explicit subjects is the futility of attempting to control a Latin American country from beyond its borders.

Yet it would be incomplete to read *Nostromo*, which Conrad finished in 1904, simply as a portent of what we have seen happening in our time in Latin America, with its United Fruit companies, despotic colonels, liberation forces, and American-financed mercenaries. For *Nostromo* also foreshadows a gaze—a way of looking at and mediating the Third World. Conrad is the precursor of novelists such as Graham Greene, V. S. Naipaul, and Robert Stone; theoreticians of imperialism such as Hannah Arendt; and of the assorted travel writers and filmmakers whose specialty is bringing home the Third World for analysis, for judgment, or simply for the entertainment of European and North American audiences, with their taste for the "exotic."

Edward W. Said is Parr Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University.

If it is true that Conrad would have us see, i*Nostromo,* the San Tomé silver mine and it British and American owners—that is, have u see imperialism—as doomed by impossible am bition, it is also true that Conrad writes as man in whom a *Western* view of the *non*-West ern world is so deeply ingrained that it blind him to other histories, other cultures, othe aspirations. All Conrad can see is a worl dominated by the West, and—of equal impor tance—a world in which every opposition t the West only confirms its wicked power. Wha Conrad could not see is life lived outside thi cruel tautology. He could not understand—o so we would have to conclude from readin him—that places like Latin America (and Indi and Africa for that matter) also contain peopl and cultures with histories and ways not con trolled by the gringo imperialists and liberal re formers of this world. Nor could he allov himself to believe that all anti-imperialis independence movements were not corrupt an in the pay of puppet masters.

These crucial limitations of vision are a much a part of *Nostromo* as its characters an plot. Seen as a magnificent, darkly ironic, an deeply pessimistic whole—whose main action i the struggle over the fortunes of the San Tom silver mine in the mythical Latin American country of Costaguana—Conrad's novel em bodies much the same paternalistic arrogance o imperialism that it mocks in its character Charles Gould, the British mine owner, an Holroyd, his American financier. Conrad seem

> be saying, we Westerners will decide who is a
> od or bad native, because all natives have suf-
> cient existence by virtue of our recognition.
> 'e created them, we taught them to speak and
> ink, and when they rebel they simply confirm
> ar views of them as silly children, duped by
> eir Western masters. This is, in effect, what
> e have felt all along about our southern
> eighbors—we wish independence and justice
> r them so long as it is the kind of inde-
> endence and justice that *we* approve. Any-
> ing else is simply unacceptable or, more
> ccurately, *unthinkable*.

Conrad was both an anti-imperialist and an mperialist—progressive when it came to ren-ering the self-confirming, self-deluding corrup-on of the West's colonial drive; reactionary in is inability to imagine that Costaguana could ver have had a meaningful existence of its wn, which the imperialists had violently dis-arbed. But lest we think patronizingly of Con-ad as merely the creature of his own time, we ad better note that we today appear to show no articular advance on his views. Conrad was ble at least to discern the evil and utter mad-ess of imperialism, something many of our riters and certainly our government is still un-ble to perceive. Conrad had the wherewithal o recognize that no imperial scheme—includ-ng "philanthropic" ones such as "making the world safe for democracy"—ever succeeds.

At the center of Costaguana stands the ountry's main asset, the San Tomé silver mine, riginally a Spanish concern, now controlled by he idealistic Englishman Charles Gould, whose amily has had a long association both with the nine and the country. The recent history that Conrad plots so intricately in the novel is main-y about the struggle for control of the mine's wealth, which insinuates its influence into marital life and personal fantasy, but mostly into politics and power. The great Latin Ameri-can revolutionary Simón Bolívar concluded that the region is fundamentally ungovernable. Conrad cites "the great Liberator" in *Nostromo*: To try to rule it is like ploughing the sea. Typi-cally, and with the unrelenting irony that is his signature, Conrad portrays Costaguana as the place *everyone* tries to rule. It was first a place native to Indian tribes. The Indians capitulate to the Spaniards. Then come the British, who in turn bring the Americans, represented by Holroyd, the San Francisco financier with the mind-set of a missionary. France is represented by Martin Decoud, a native Costaguanan who after some years in Paris has become a journalist and a cynical boulevardier. In addition, there are the Montero brothers, a pair of lazy but op-portunistic military men who have spent time in Paris,where they seem to have perfected the arts of conspiracy and of Blanquist insurrection. Ita-ly too has a presence in Costaguana: Giorgio Viola, an elderly Garibaldian who once cam-paigned with his revered leader in Uruguay but is now an innkeeper in Sulaco; and Gian' Bat-tista Fidanza, known as Nostromo, a Genoese bos'n who slipped ashore after a maritime in-fraction, and has become the leader of the port's miscellaneous population of stevedores, mule-teers, and idle ships' hands.

Conrad was able at least to discern the evil and utter madness of imperialism

Told as a series of complicated, sometimes overlapping and digressive flashbacks, *Nostro-mo* unfolds the story of the struggle waged by Charles and Emelia Gould, the mine's own-ers, to maintain the silver works free of local politics, and what they believe to be narrow in-terests. Conrad's portrait of the couple is devas-tating—and at times strangely compassionate. Charles is haunted by memories of his Uncle Henry, who was killed by a revolutionary dicta-tor, and of his father, whose fruitless efforts to revive the mine broke his heart. Charles and Emelia bring a new prosperity and power to the silver mine, but in the process of rehabilitating the place they identify their altruistic plans with the mine's prestige and wealth, and use these plans to justify widespread corruption, as well as rule by mercenaries, and the continued oppres-sion of the native population by the Spanish-style local oligarchy.

That is not all. Gould is so determined to re-tain absolute control of the mine—because, he thinks, he is both incorruptible and above any ignoble or worldly temptations—that he is quite prepared to blow the place up, should it seem to be falling into the wrong hands. How many other fruit, oil, or tin company presidents in the twentieth century have felt that combi-nation of patriarchal solicitude and murderous determination! Gould is totally unable to see how much he is victimized by the silver, whose ultimate masters are the distant imperialists, the mine's financiers. Nor can Gould see how he and his wife, for all their wonderfully selfless as-pirations and their loyalty to the country, have atrophied spiritually—he into an aloof symbol of power, she into a kindly fairy godmother whose sole ability to relieve people in acute dis-tress is to listen to their pleas after it is too late to do or undo anything. Together the Goulds sail through life, making deals and ensnaring innocents, realizing their ruthless plans, all the while maintaining their composure against a violent background. So volatile is Costagua-na that Conrad's depiction of its history is but a string of dictatorships, coups, and new dictatorships.

Costaguana, at once wealthy and vulnerable

The world today does not exist as a spectacle about which we can either be pessimistic or optimistic

to the schemes of indigenous as well as foreign speculators, is therefore meant by Conrad to be typical of Latin America, which is quite different from Africa as a target for imperialism. Africa, in Conrad's view, represents elemental darkness; in it there are only blacks and rapacious or demented whites. On the other hand, Costaguana has "histories," if scattered and incomplete—histories Indian and Spanish, more recently European and American, some religiously inspired, others commercially motivated.

By the end of *Nostromo,* the coastal province of Sulaco—in which the silver mine is situated—has seceded from Costaguana and become an independent state. The place is now more than ever a triumph of neo-colonialism ruled by Gould and Holroyd, and by the local oligarchs who have managed to co-opt even the formerly intransigent bandits and priests. Everyone, in short, is shaped by "material interests."

There was no work of European fiction until *Nostromo,* no authorial vision, that so piercingly and unsparingly captured the imperialist project in Latin America. And no one before Conrad saw that the struggle over the region's prizes (land, fruit, metals, oil) would be so enmeshed in the struggle of ideas—Western attitudes toward the non-European world. Holroyd, the American financier, is not only greedy but infused with the moralistic self-righteousness of a Puritan divine—profits for him are good for Latin American *souls,* much as today we hear politicians proclaim that the security of "our hemisphere" is good for *us* and good for *them.*

As rigorously as Marx, Conrad saw that commodity fetishism can incorporate anything and anyone. Imperialism therefore has the capacity to reproduce itself infinitely. The newly independent state of Sulaco that emerges at the end of *Nostromo* is only a smaller, more tightly controlled and intolerant version of Costaguana, the larger country from which it has seceded and has now displaced in wealth and importance. Conrad perceived that imperialism is a system. *Everything* in the subordinate realm of experience is imprinted by the fictions and follies of the dominant realm.

This is a profoundly unforgiving view, and it has quite literally engendered the equally severe view of Western imperialist illusions that we find, for instance, in Graham Greene's *The Quiet American* or V. S. Naipaul's *A Bend in the River.* The fervent innocence of Greene's Pyle or Naipaul's Father Huismans—men for whom the natives can be educated into "our" civilization—turns out actually to produce murder, subversion, and endless instability in the societies wherein they hope to bring the better things of modern civilization.

Yet works such as these, which are so inde ed to Conrad's anti-imperialist irony in *N tromo,* invariably locate the source of significant action and life in the West, wh representatives seem at liberty to visit their f tasies and philanthropies upon a mind-d ened Third World. Without the West, h outlying regions of the world have no life, hi ry, or culture to speak of, no independenc integrity worth representing. When ther something indigenous to be described, it is, lowing Conrad, unutterably corrupt, dege ate, irredeemable. But whereas Conrad ma forgiven—he wrote *Nostromo* during a perio Europe of largely uncontested imperialist t thusiasms—contemporary novelists (and fi makers), who have learned his ironies so w have no excuse for their blindness. They h done their work *after* decolonization; *after* massive intellectual, moral, and imagina overhaul and deconstruction of Western r resentation of the non-Western world; *a* the work of Frantz Fanon, Amilcar Cab C. L. R. James, Walter Rodney; *after* the no and plays of Chinua Achebe, Ngugi Wa Thi O, Wole Soyinka, Salman Rushdie, Gab García Márquez, and many others. West writers have maintained their biases in the *f* of history.

This is not just a matter of Westerners w cannot feel enough sympathy for foreign c tures, since there are, after all, some artists a intellectuals who have, in effect, crossed over the other side—Jean Genet, Basil Davids Albert Memmi. What is crucial and must be veloped is the political willingness to take se ously the alternatives to imperialism, and grant, in Aimé Césaire's words, that "no r has a monopoly on beauty, on intelligence, strength, and there is room for everyone at t convocation of conquest."

Whether we read *Nostromo* solely to confi our habitual suspicions about Latin America, whether we see in it the lineaments of *our* imp rial worldview, capable of warping the persp tives of reader and author equally: *those* are t real alternatives. The world today does not ex as a spectacle about which we can either be p simistic or optimistic, about which our "tex can either be ingenious or boring. All such titudes involve the deployment of power a interests. To the extent that we can see C rad both criticizing and reproducing the im rial ideology of his time, to that extent we c characterize our own attitudes: the projecti or the refusal, of the wish to dominate, capacity to damn or the energy to comp hend and engage other societies, traditio histories.

MONSIEUR F. LIKES JEAN-MARIE

The provincial appeal of Le Pen

By David Zane Mairowitz

It's election Sunday in the tiny Midi vine village where I've lived these ast five years, and Monsieur F., my sparagus connection, is standing in he square under the monument to he war dead. He throws me a *bonjour*, eaming as I pass, and winks his enhusiasm: "*On est bien maintenant.*" We're all right now." He, as well as orty-four others, out of a register of ome three hundred-odd, has just vot-d "Le Pen" in the most recent Na-ional Assembly elections.

I work out the calculations and ar-ive at an impressive 14 percent, here n a traditionally socialist enclave, who have accepted the aggressively ro-French, anti-immigrant chal-enge of the National Front party and ts leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen. Their partisanship doesn't make much sense in this sleepy hollow where I am the only foreigner, and where, from the first raising of the plastic that covers the March asparagus to the late September wine harvest, you can see, at most, three or four timid Moroccan seasonal workers, with no choice but to keep entirely to themselves, earning just enough to speed them, via the Marseilles ferry, home for the winter. I ask myself: Has Monsieur F.'s vote saved Saint Laurent la Vernède, population 500, from this savage horde?

I know that Monsieur F. is neither a fascist nor a thug, not at all the sort of man to fit my image of a *Lepeniste*. He's not even "political"; he belongs to no party, and the only organization he belongs to is the local farmers' cooperative. He's had a series of disastrous crop seasons; no doubt the socialist government has let him down on its promise of subsidies. Perhaps he's venting his frustration with his vote for the National Front, which tries, through its opposition to the powers-that-be, to convince him that others are responsible for the distance between his desire and its fulfillment. Perhaps he shares the anger of a National Front leader at the new Common Market regulations on cattle breeding: "You, ladies, you're lucky, you can choose your sires. Our cows don't have that right."

The discontent runs deep. During the last five years, France has had its share of terrorist bombs, economic hardship, and unemployment. Insecurity is everywhere, and scapegoats are found among the growing immigrant Arab population. This is especially true here in the south, where the many *pieds-noirs*, ex-French colonials who fled to France during the Algerian War, provide Le Pen with the raw material of historical resentment. The anti-immigration phenomenon is, of course, a Pan-European reality; even Norway is about to approve legislation aimed at curbing Pakistani immigration. But only in France is the lobby graced with a political party that can claim 10 percent of the total vote cast in the last National Assembly election, as much as 20 percent in some provinces, and a whopping 25 percent in the second largest city, Marseilles. The implication is clear in a parliamentary system: none of the major right-wing groups can afford to ignore Le Pen. He is widely expected to be a power broker in this spring's presidential election. Assuming no one wins a majority in the first round of voting this month, Le Pen's support of the conservative in the runoff next month could be crucial.

Le Pen will take you to court if you call him a fascist. Yet his rallies are held in regimental style—medals, uniforms, flags, macho bodyguards. At the hastily set-up stands on the sidelines, you can buy, among the anti-Arab propaganda, shiny buttons bearing the collaborationist face of Marshal Pétain, Nazi souvenirs, and—under the table—a book which purports to list the name of every Jew living in France.

Monsieur F. is not one to march in parades, but hardly a day passes that he doesn't see his hero—who knows how to create news—on television, promising to return France to the French. And doing so with an effective mixture of menace, braggadocio, and high kitsch: "The simple fact of having emerged from the womb of his mother gives the Frenchman a prestigious heritage." Le Pen does not hesitate to summon up Joan of Arc or to helicopter onto Mont-Saint-Michel to deliver a political sermon. He has referred to himself as "the Zorro of the poor and the French" and

David Zane Mairowitz's last article for Harper's, *"Le Break Dance? Jamais de la Vie!" appeared in November 1986.*

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a "Robin Hood who is not afraid to shoot arrows into fat asses."

Although Le Pen dreams of becoming the "French Reagan" and reintegrating France into NATO, he expresses a strong hostility toward melting-pot America. The National Front attacks IBM, Coca-Cola, and NBC, not only for their economic influence, but for selling the image of a "pluri-cultural" and multiracial society throughout the West. A National Front pamphlet claims that "fast food joints open in proportion to the number of immigrants."

Of course, this tested combination of nationalist pride and enemy targeting needs a touch of fear, and Le Pen does not shrink from the totalitarian tactic of frightening people in their genitals. What more fertile field for demagoguery is there in contemporary France than AIDS? Much as Hitler exploited a genuine anxiety about syphilis (which he claimed Jews were responsible for spreading), Le Pen is exploiting French anxiety about AIDS. France has the second highest number of AIDS cases in the West. Le Pen recognizes that the government's anti-AIDS educational campaign—compared to its aggressive program of scientific research—has been late in coming and is not very informative; he's filling the void with information of his own.

Le Pen went on television last May and grossly exaggerated the number of victims and the cost to the state, while denying the efficacy of condoms. According to Le Pen, most AIDS cases are "due to sodomy," thereby laying the blame on homosexuality,which, Le Pen says,"is leading us, if it develops, to the end of the world."

Along with this, Le Pen promotes a climatic explanation of Western superiority over the Third World. In hot countries, so his argument goes, precocious sexuality and sexually related diseases are rampant; as a result, intelligence remains at a low level. On the other hand, Le Pen argues, "retarded sexuality explains the exceptional intellectual development of our civilization."

If Le Pen has little compunction about bashing gays and immigrants, he has been careful to pirouette

ound the perimeter of one dark ole—anti-Semitism. He has taken a rong pro-Israel stand, brought sever- French-Jewish notables into his ump, and even managed to get him- lf invited to a New York City dinner February 1987 with twenty-four presentatives of various American- wish organizations.

Nonetheless, like Dr. Strangelove, hose petrified arm shoots to a *Sieg eil* salute no matter how he tries to old it down, so Le Pen cannot con- in what lies just beneath the sur- ce. Responding to a television inter- ewer's provocation last September, ie presidential candidate referred to ie Nazi gas chambers as a mere "de- il" of World War II. Later, accord- ig to the Paris magazine *Globe*, Le en gave credence to the testimony of doctor who claimed to have arrived - Buchenwald before the American oops and then watched them hastily uild the crematoria—in order to sub- stantiate Jewish claims about the number of deaths at the camp.

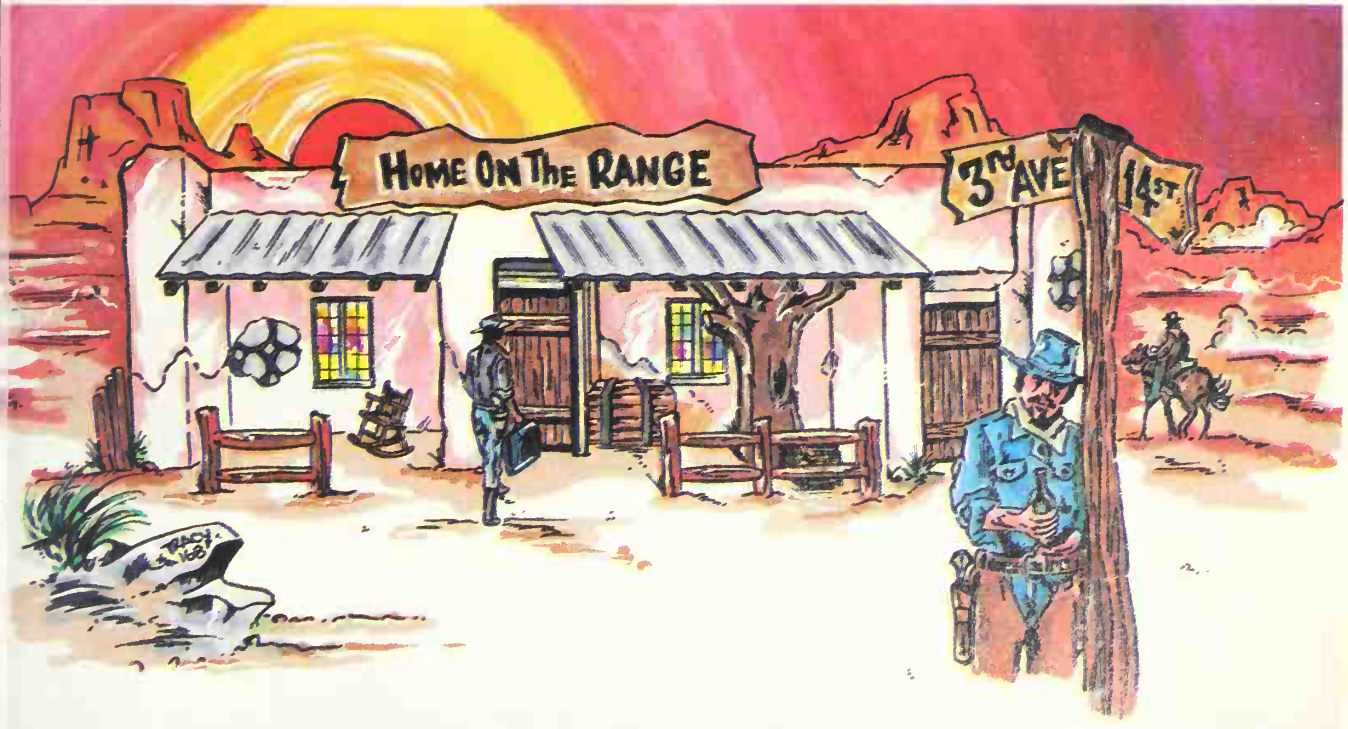
Predictably, Le Pen's comments provoked an onslaught of criticism, but he deftly counterattacked, using the familiar fascist procedure of reversing the roles of hangman and victim (remember how the poor German nation suffered at the hands of Jewish usurers). Declaring that there was now an "affaire Le Pen" as there had once been an "affaire Dreyfus," the leader presented himself as the target of a media witch-hunt (read "Jewish conspiracy"). Monsieur F. bought the argument thumbs up.

There are still many Frenchmen, like Monsieur F., who believe that in 1940 a badly trained French army was overrun by the Nazis, that the years of collaboration were forced on the country, and that, in the end, a massive heroic resistance movement opposed the German occupation.

Fascism is unfinished business in France.

Every small village has its own pantheon of mythological heroes and villains from those years. Monsieur D., the only card-carrying pacifist in Saint Laurent la Vernède, will tell you how he arrived in 1941 as the new village barber, and was immediately questioned for not having a portrait of Marshal Pétain in his shop—a seemingly trivial offense for which, he will assure you, he could easily have turned up stiff under shrubbery in the local *garrigue*. A few months ago, you could almost hear the sighs of relief across France when Klaus Barbie, the Butcher of Lyons, decided not to speak at his trial. It had been widely expected that his testimony would sully the resistance myth.

Le Pen is rattling these skeletons in their cupboards. But this doesn't present Monsieur F. with any problems.



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What are the facts?

■ Israel is a democratic country—an open, pluralistic, and egalitarian society. Different religions, cultures, and social traditions coexist. Protection of such diversity is embedded in Israeli's traditions and confirmed by the government. Seventeen per cent of the total population (700,000 people) are non-Jews, most of them Arabs, and some Druze. Like all other Israeli citizens, they have full rights to vote and to hold elective office. Both Arabs and Druze hold seats in the Knesset, the Israeli parliament. Every Knesset, since the founding of the state in 1948, has had Arab and Druze members. All transactions in the Knesset are simultaneously translated into Arabic, and Arab members may address the Knesset in Arabic.

■ It is official policy of the Israeli government to foster the language, culture, and traditions of the Arab minority, in the educational system and in daily life. Arabic is an official language in Israel, together with Hebrew. Israel's Arabic press is the most vibrant and independent of any country in the region: there are more than 20 Arabic periodicals. They publish what they please, subject only to the same military censorship as Jewish publications. There are daily TV and radio programs in Arabic. Arabic is taught in Jewish secondary schools. Israeli universities are renowned centers of learning in the history and literature of the Arab Middle East.

■ Education and literacy of the Arab population in Israel is as high and probably higher than in any Arab country. The literacy rate among Israeli Arabs is 95%, virtually the same as for Israeli Jews. There are some 700 Arab educational institutions in Israel, with about 200,000 students—17 times as many as in 1948, when the State of Israel was created. 90% of Arab children attend school, probably the highest ratio of any Arab population anywhere. Israeli universities and technical institutions are freely available to the Arabs. About 3,000 Arab students attend such schools.

■ All religious communities in Israel enjoy the full protection of the State. Israeli Arabs—Moslems, as well as many Christian denominations—are free to exercise their faiths, to observe their own weekly day of rest and holidays, and to administer their own internal affairs. Each community has its own religious councils and courts, and has full jurisdiction over religious affairs, including matters of personal status, such as marriage and divorce. The holy sites of all religions are administered by their own authorities and protected by the government.

■ In contrast to the non-Israeli Arab world, Arab women in Israel enjoy the same status as men. Israeli law grants women equal rights, including the right to vote and to be elected to public office, prohibits polygamy and child marriage, and has thus vastly changed the status of women, to far above that of any country in the region. Israeli health standards are by far the highest in the Middle East. Israeli health institutions are freely open to all Arabs, on the same basis as they are to Jews.

■ There is, however one difference between the "rights" of Arabs and Jews in Israel. Israeli and Druze men are required to do three years of military service and then serve one month every year until they are 50. Arabs are exempted from military duty and are not required to perform any compensating civilian service. Since the surrounding Arab states, with the recent exception of Egypt, are the avowed enemies of Israel and are dedicated to its destruction, this exemption is granted by the Israeli Government to its Arab citizens, so as to spare them conflicts of loyalty and conscience.

Contrary to propaganda and to what many believe, the Arabs in Israel are full-fledged citizens, enjoy every civil right, and have the same status in law as Jewish Israelis. In summary, they enjoy the highest standards of living and liberty of any Arabs in the Middle East. It is instructive and sobering to compare the condition of the approximately 700,000 Arabs in Israel with that of the pitiful remnants of Jewry in Arab countries. Jews have been living in Arab countries for almost 2000 years. Under Arab dominance, they were always third-class citizens and subject to harassment and to persecution. There were about 900,000 Jews in Arab countries in 1948—now there are fewer than 25,000. But there are now 700,000 Arabs in Israel, as against 150,000 in 1948—a more than four-fold increase. These figures alone would seem to prove that things can't be all that bad for Arabs in Israel.

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April Index Sources

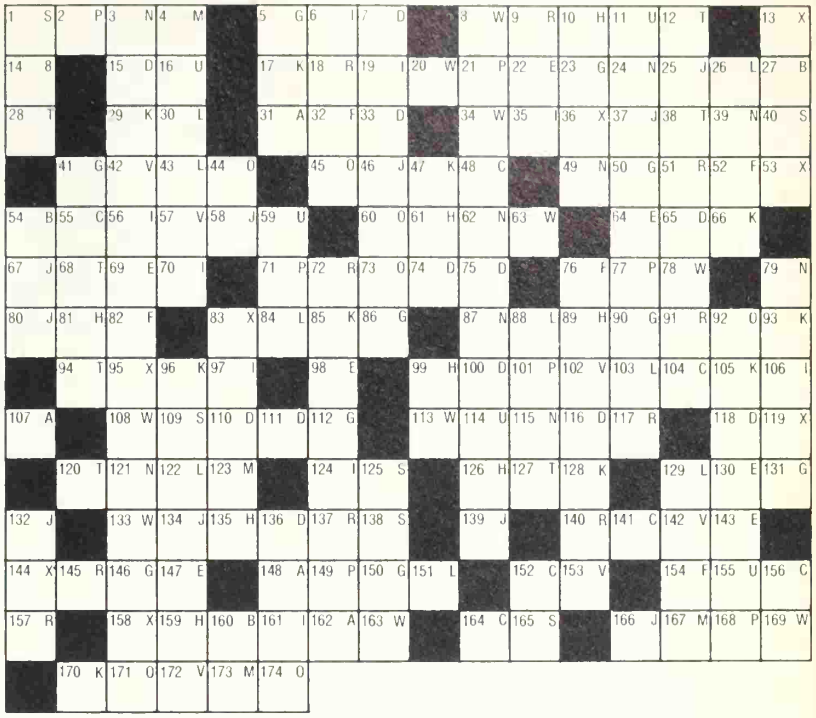
1 Nikkei International (Tokyo); 2,3 Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association (Detroit); 4,5 Robert Lipsey, Irving Kravis, National Bureau of Economic Research (N.Y.C.); 6 Federal Election Commission; 7,8,9 *Harper's* research; 10,11 Gallup Organization (Princeton, N.J.); 12 Michael D'Antonio, *APF Reporter* (Bethesda, Md.); 13 Dr. Yair Bar-El (Jerusalem); 14 *Le Monde* (Paris); 15,16 Mohammed Shadid, Al-Najah University (Nablus, West Bank), Rick Seltzer, Howard University (Washington); 17 West Bank Data Base Project (Jerusalem); 18 Iraqi Embassy (Washington); 19 Dept. of State; 20 *Demograficheskiy Entsiklopedicheskiy Slovar/USSR Facts and Figures Annual*, Academic International Press (Gulf Breeze, Fla.); 21,22,23 William Eckhardt, Lentz Peace Research Laboratory (St. Louis); 24 Dept. of Defense; 25 Dept. of Justice; 26 Planned Parenthood Federation of America (N.Y.C.); 27,28 Bureau of Justice Statistics/*Harper's* research; 29 Andrew Hacker, Queens College (N.Y.C.); 30,31 Citizens for Tax Justice (Washington); 32 IRS; 33 General Accounting Office/IRS; 34 Manhattan Borough President's Task Force on Housing for Homeless Families; 35 Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Washington); 36 Stephanie Chavez, James Quinn, *Los Angeles Times*; 37 Los Angeles Police Department; 38 Yankelovich Clancy Shulman/Nickelodeon (N.Y.C.); 39 *Weekly Reader* National Survey on Drugs and Drinking (Middletown, Conn.); 40 Friends for Education (Daniels, W. Va.).

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 64

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 79.



CLUES

A. Flush; be ardent; be luminous — 162 107 31 148

B. Game banned in 1457 in Scotland as a threat to archery practice — 54 160 27 14

C. Am. author (1885–1957; *Arundel*) — 104 141 152 48 55 164 156

D. Hero of John Lyly's *Anatomy of Wit* — 7 136 110 65 15 33 75

E. Vicarious experience of another's feelings — 143 69 22 98 64 130 147

F. Small, semi-aquatic salamanders — 32 52 154 76 82

G. At some time; at length; finally — 146 90 131 50 41 23 5 150 / 86 112

H. "Fear no more ____ o' the great" (2 wds., *Cymbeline*) — 81 61 10 126 89 135 99 159

I. Obliterated; bumped off (2 wds.) — 6 106 70 124 35 19 56 161 / 97

J. WORD F, frogs, etc. — 25 132 37 134 46 67 139 80 / 58 166

K. Capable of being ascertained — 47 93 128 17 105 29 96 170 / 85 66

L. High-spirited; overflowing with enthusiasm — 103 26 88 122 151 84 43 30 / 129

M. Squandered; ruined; confused — 123 173 4 167

N. Adverse criticism; tightness — 87 24 115 121 39 3 49 79 / 62

O. Flexible, lithe, graceful — 174 118 73 45 100 60 44

P. Province of central Iran; its cap. and former cap. of Persia — 149 21 71 2 77 168 101

Q. Count; have weight — 111 171 116 74

R. Arbitrary (hyph.) — 9 91 137 145 140 72 18 51 / 157 117

S. Nurture; give rise to; foster; tend — 109 165 40 138 125 1

T. What the bow was made of (hyph.; Doyle, "Song of the Bow") — 28 38 120 94 68 127 12

U. Shuns, escapes — 11 92 114 155 59 16

V. Supported — 57 142 42 153 172 102

W. "That stands upon the swell at full of tide,/And ____ inclines" (2 wds., *Antony and Cleopatra*) — 63 108 20 133 163 78 34 113 / 8 169

X. "____ returns to laughter" (2 wds., *King Lear*) — 119 95 158 83 13 53 36 144

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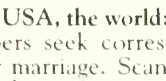

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E	A	R	N	E	S	T	G	L	I	T	C	H
L	A	R	E	D	O	I	E	O	O	S	L	O
E	T	I	S	U	M	O	R	O	N	I	C	U
C	R	E	S	C	E	N	T	S	I	R	A	N
T	I	R	O	L	A	L	I	E	N	S	R	D
S	O	S	O	A	L	L	E	R	G	I	E	S

NOTES FOR "SEND A LETTER"

Note: Diagram entries for altered clue answers are given in parentheses. ACROSS: 1. OVER-CALLS (COVERALLS); 7. HE(W)N (WHEN); 11. MACRAE, anagram; 13. OKAPI, hidden; 14. PARE, "pair" (PEAR); 15. A CRO(BATI)C, anagram of BAIT; 18. ETCHERS (RETCHES); 19. ACHE, hidden (EACH); 21. EUC(reversal)-HRE; 23. S(N)AILS; 24. SCANTER, anagram (CANTERS); 25. NEAREST, anagram (EARNEST); 26. G-LIT-CH; 28. LA-RE-DO; 29. SO-LO(ng) (OSLO); 32. MORONIC, hidden; 34. (. . . C. . .) RESCE(NTS, anagram of SECRETS; 35. RAIN, "reign" (IRAN); 36. TI-RO (reversal)-L; 37. ALINES, anagram (ALIENS); 38. SO-SO, "sow sow"; 39. GAL(L)ERIES, anagram (ALLERGIES). DOWN: 1. S. . . COPES (COPSES); 2. (d)ROVE (OVER); 3. HE-ARTINESS (EARTHINESS); 4. A(R)CHES; 5. L(OS)E, reversal of SO (LEOS); 6. SO(B)S; 8. T(HATCH)ES, reversal of SET (HATCHETS); 9. PIC-E (EPIC); 10. IN-CHES(S) (NICHES); 12. C-LACKED (CACKLED); 16. CREATION, anagram (REACTION); 17. CA-U-TIONING (anagram) (AUCTION-ING); 20. S(CA/o)RRIER (CARRIERS); 22. UNLOOSE, anagram; 25. S(EL)ECT (ELECTS); 26. GERTIE, anagram; 27. HOU(r ha)NDS; 30. RIOT, anagram (TRIO); 31. UC(reversal)-L-A; 32. MALE(factor) (MEAL); 33. AC(. . .R)E (CARE).

SOLUTION TO MARCH DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 63). PAT CONROY: THE PRINCE OF TIDES. My mother believed in the dreams of . . . animals. Copperheads, she would say, dreamed of placing their fangs in the shinbones of hunters. . . . There were the brute wings of owls in the nightmares of ermine, the . . . approach of timberwolves in the night stillness of elk.

CONTEST RULES: Send the quotation, the name of the author, and the title of the work, together with your name and address, to Double Acrostic No. 64, *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's Magazine*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by April 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. The solution will be printed in the May issue. Winners of Double Acrostic No. 62 are Allan E. Wilson, New York, New York; Victoria Shouldis, Hillsboro, New Hampshire; and Sarah V. Lawton, New Paltz, New York.

PUZZLE

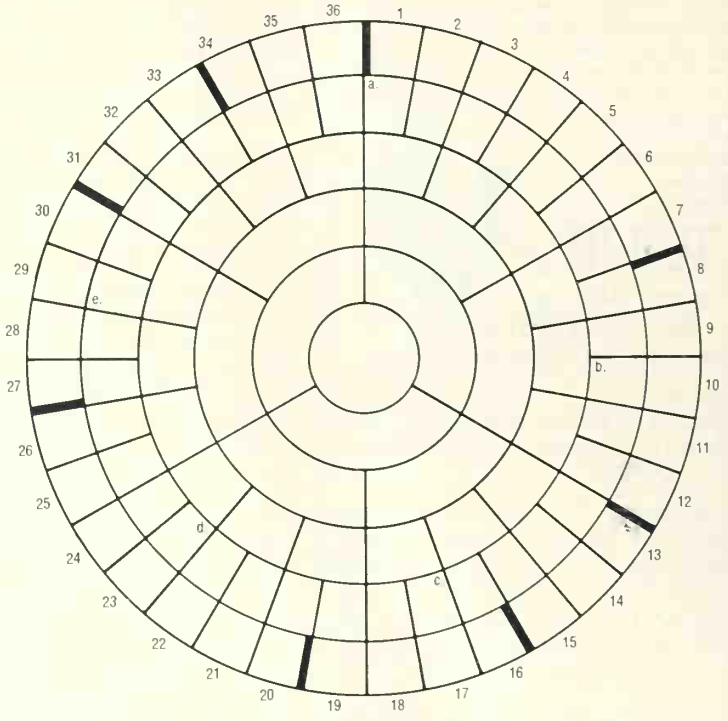
Dress Circle

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

The six-letter answers to the thirty-six numbered clues are to be entered radially, *with their letters in mixed order*. Their positions can be calculated by the letters that are shared with other entries. Thus the central circle contains a letter that appears in all entries, and so on. There are ten different letters in the three innermost circles. The fifth circle from the center contains five clued entries, to be entered clockwise *but also with their letters mixed*.

When the diagram is completed, the outermost circle will reveal an eight-word quotation (the bars indicate word lengths) beginning at 1 and reading clockwise. Its author is spelled out clockwise in the fourth circle from the center, beginning at a position to be determined.

Answers to radial clues include one proper name. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 79.



Radials (six-letter words)

1. Pine heartlessly for present
2. Famous gangster is chicken to English
3. These could be tossed in oceans! . . .
4. . . . and Charon could be at sea with this!
5. Using sarcasm is radical in the Greek style
6. Brother engaged in taking care of wild horse
7. Was the helmsman bamboozled
8. Court room used to study stiff
9. Son unloved? Was in debt, and duped
10. Concealed by Napoleon, war drive is moving ahead
11. That is Democrat, describing Reagan as pressed
12. Providing medication with an entreaty to Pavarotti to perform?
13. Left in tailored robe, love short jacket
14. Costello and Skelton, back to back? It's getting more raucous
15. Hang around, taking look at mysterious rite
16. Mushroom stuffed with a bit of shrimp . . . just a bit
17. Spanish cheer about river bird
18. To err is almost criminal, and he's out of control
19. Near to tear . . . quite florid
20. Paintings filled with love, like they come from the heart
21. Red wine I'm first to bring in
22. Quick to cavort during physical training
23. Men only holding gold . . . turned over old English coins
24. The chicken that's in the oven without a roll
25. Peddler, in front, sharpens calls
26. Perfect kind of European
27. Concerned with letters as plot develops
28. A right to be in possibly posh surroundings, as a lighthouse
29. Took a pistol, being crossed by African animals
30. "Punch in," Poles said
31. I bet so foolishly in nightclubs
32. Get socks from him, or is he reformed
33. Rose is transplanted with willows
34. Girl is so munificent, holding plastic
35. Provincial jargon shows one time in unfinished poise
36. Racehorses running in last courses?

Fifth Circle

a. Forbid writing about bed for infants (9)
b. Bishop has crests and crosses (7)
c. It immobilizes Navy in Yugoslavian port (6)
d. Stick around in Berlin, Germany (6)
e. Kid left in rotten tree. This is awful (8)

Contest Rules: Send completed diagram with name and address to "Dress Circle," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's Magazine*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. Winners' names will be printed in the June issue. Winners of the February puzzle, "Mirror Image," are Vee Converse Hammond, Warner Robins, Georgia; Daniel A. Moran, East Lansing, Michigan; and Michael Green, Saint Louis, Missouri.

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HARPER'S

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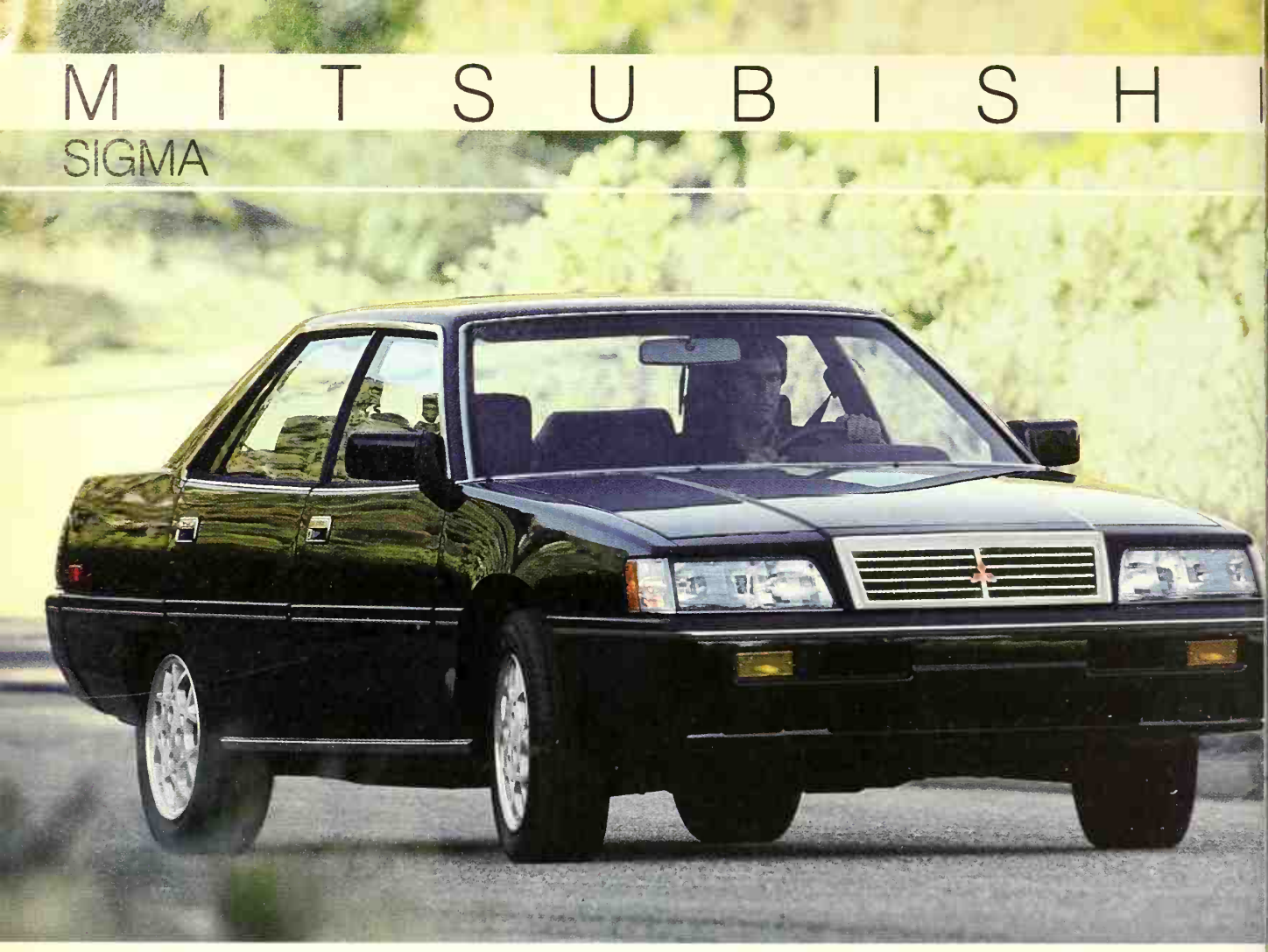

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LETTERS

I. F. Stone's Socrates

Perhaps I.F. Stone is right about Socrates' character and sentiments, his elitism and anti-democratic notions ["When Free Speech Was First Condemned," February]. But none of that really gets us to the heart of what is going on in *The Apology*, or explains the resonance it has for us today, even for those of us who dislike Socrates' supposed conservatism. And this seems to me terribly important—not so much for our understanding of Socrates (which will always be speculative and incomplete) but in terms of our own modern ideas about freedom: what it is, what it ought to be, and what its sources or origins are.

Stone seems to have trouble accepting Socrates' notion that there exists, outside the polis, a realm of privacy, being, and freedom that must remain totally beyond the sovereignty of any state, no matter how democratic or liberal its laws. For Socrates, virtue, wisdom, and therefore, true freedom, though they are expressed in the polis, are rooted outside of it, in being itself, in an inward relation to one's daimon or god—what we might, *might*, in modern terms call conscience or its voices. True freedom, in such a view, can neither be granted by nor derived from the polis or state, since it begins prior to them all, in an inwardness which renders all other relations—even political ones—secondary.

Obviously this kind of thinking can lend itself to certain kinds of elitism. If virtue, wisdom, and freedom are rooted in inward activity and discipline rather than participation in the polis, then not all men can be said to be equally virtuous, wise, or truly free. The idea of the philosopher-king thus arises, along with certain notions of hierarchy and authoritarianism that most of us deplore, and that Stone, quite stubbornly and almost heroically, has always opposed.

But there is more to Socrates than this. The same beliefs that can become elitist also offer us the foundation for a far more radical and demanding notion of freedom than the one held by Socrates' accusers or apparently—bite my tongue!—by Stone himself. Tolstoy comes to mind, as do Camus and Paul Goodman, each of whose radical critiques of authority and resistance to authority owes at least something to Socrates. All three held, as did he, that it was only the promptings of individual conscience, an inward dialogue with self or soul, that provides a private

Harper's Magazine welcomes Letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters are subject to editing. Letters must be typed double-spaced; volume precludes individual acknowledgment.

and irreducible basis upon which one can—indeed, must—judge and resist the behavior of *all* states.

And it is exactly this aspect of Socratic thought—the one that challenges us the most, that offers us the most—that Stone seems dead set on tossing out. Perhaps it is simply too difficult for genuine liberals to acknowledge that conservatives may have, at times, a more radical notion of freedom than they do. But whatever the cause, the speech about "free speech" that Stone writes for Socrates replaces Socrates' larger idea of freedom with a much smaller and more comfortably familiar one—one that cedes to the Assembly precisely the territory that Socrates sought to protect from its powers: the inwardness of being, over which it has no sovereignty, no rights. Remember what Socrates is trying to do, the course he is trying to steer. He grants to the Assembly the right to try him, to sentence him; but he denies to it all right to judge him *morally*. Seen in that context, Stone's proposed speech would have amounted to the worst kind of submission or self-betrayal for Socrates. It would have been something akin to "naming names." For in pleading for "free speech," Socrates would have been handing over to the Assembly, would have been sacrificing, the very inwardness of being, the supremacy of privacy (in terms of language, in terms of thought) that he meant to protect.

Think, here, of Dashiell Hammett and Lillian Hellman, those long-term lovers and friends, and their call to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Hellman, who went free, for years made eloquent speeches about the event. Hammett, who went to jail, chose silence in order to maintain a kind of absolute privacy. His denial through silence of the Committee's power, even its power to elicit a response, seems to me in some way more rebellious, subversive, and "un-American," if you will, than Hellman's eloquence. He refused, in essence, to play by anyone's rules but his own.

And so it is with Socrates. His refusal to respond to the Assembly on any terms other than his own is a defense of freedom far more absolute than any talk about freedom of speech would have been. Even now, it remains as resistant to our liberal attempt at interpretation as it was, back then, to the Assembly's assertion of sovereignty. That is what gives it its power. The privacy it asserts, the sources of wisdom it avows, the arrogance it conveys—all of this confounds us in our liberal goodwill, calls our familiar political categories and beliefs into question, and challenges us with an idea of freedom which implies our own is inadequate, incomplete, perhaps even tyrannous.

Recasting Socrates' arguments in our own terms neither meets nor eliminates that challenge. That simply leaves it still there: mysterious, a sort of stone in our midst, demanding from us, and suggesting to us, a kind of freedom, an order of freedom, that no amount of talk about free speech can satisfy or match.

Peter Marin
Santa Barbara, Calif.

I have made an extensive study of the jury system from its most ancient manifestations in Sumer right up to 1988 and am convinced that trial by jury is the bulwark of all liberty—that is, when the jury is free and independent—not dominated by the court—and receives all the evidence.

There are other characteristics to a true jury, however, and these seem to have been overlooked by I.F. Stone. Although the *dikastery*, before which Socrates argued, possessed many of the characteristics of a present-day jury, it failed in the following ways: First, a true jury required unanimity. Without unanimity there is no conviction, and on that ground alone the Greek *dikastery* should not be termed a "jury." The second difference is that there was no intra-jury discussion. The battles between the sequestered jurors may be the most important character of a true jury, and had this occurred at the trial of Socrates, it is reasonable to assume that a sufficient number of those who were eager to convict would have been swung over. All that the individual *dikasts* did was cast ballots as they left the court; the verdict was a simple majority rule.

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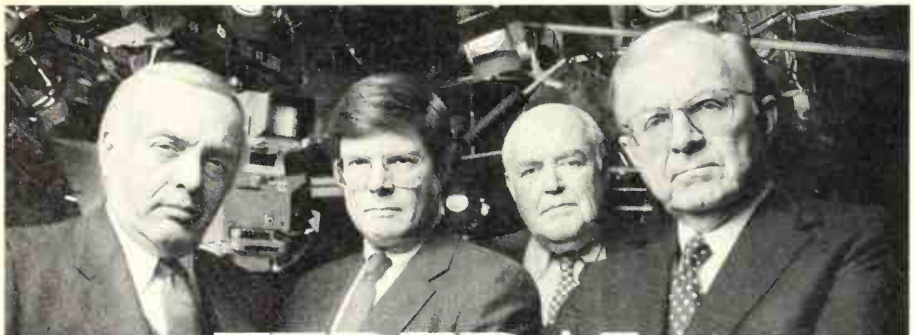

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The French, attempting in 1808 to adopt the Anglican jury system, also made the error of not requiring unanimity. As a result, Emile Zola was "convicted" by a vote of 7-5, and the son of Victor Hugo was convicted of writing an article against the death penalty by a badly split "non-jury." Unanimity was required by juries under the Russian czars; this almost cost Alexander II his throne a century ago. William Penn's life was saved in 1670 by the unanimity requirement. One of our late-twentieth-century American tragedies is the growing movement to accept non-unanimous convictions as well as smaller panels. This will lead to greater domination by government, and thus the death of liberty.

Godfrey D. Lehman
San Francisco, Calif.

Instead of suggesting how Socrates might have escaped a fate he did not care to escape, I.F. Stone might better ask why Socrates did not fear death, and what he meant by "the vision of the Good," and where he found the confidence to follow the course he did. If we don't consider those questions, we might as well say, "Socrates drank himself to death," and leave it at that.

Miles Hawthorne
Austin, Tex.

As a teacher of classical literature, I want to take issue with I.F. Stone's reductive and distorted image of Socrates. The Socrates of Stone's portrait is not the courageous, passionately curious, witty, and often exasperating teacher who has inspired millions of readers of Plato's *Apology*. Instead, Socrates is portrayed as a cold-hearted, elitist, peevish crank going out of his way to antagonize a jury in order to fulfill his own death wish. It is hard to imagine Socrates as the symbol of "the courage of the human situation in the face of fate and death" that Paul Tillich describes him as in *The Courage to Be*.

Stone is most misleading when he characterizes Socrates' personal quest. Castigating Socrates for not living up to Aristotle's definition of

man as a political animal, Stone would have us believe that the neurotic old sage was on "a metaphysical wild goose chase for unattainable absolute definitions."

Granted, Socrates' whole career was one relentless search for absolutes. But Stone ignores why. The answer is that Socrates lived in an age of moral relativism. The Sophists, the reigning teachers of the day, denied that there were any eternal standards by which men and women on the dark ocean of life could find their way. Rather, the Sophists argued that people were condemned to flounder in the ideological backwaters of their particular cultures, constructing what rafts they could out of arbitrary motives for power and greed. It was in this climate of intellectual skepticism and moral anarchy that Socrates began his lifelong struggle to find the transcendent self. Calling himself a "midwife of souls," Socrates tried to help each person he encountered bring forth a deeper understanding of himself.

William R. Cozart
Stephen F. Austin State University
Nacogdoches, Tex.

If Socrates knew of a way in which he may have been acquitted, why did he not pursue it? I.F. Stone responds, inadequately, that Socrates "wanted to die and set out deliberately to provoke the jury."

From my reading of Plato's *Apology*, it is clear that Socrates would not have compromised his lifelong dedication to virtue by seeking his own death. As Stone points out, Socrates behaved offensively and insultingly. This was not, however, because he "wanted to die," but rather that his reasoning dictated that a scolding was due the jury. His life was not on trial but *philosophy* and *philosophers* and the *philosopher's life* was. It was in defense of these beliefs, not of his life, that Socrates spoke. His defense ends with the following statement: "No, gentlemen, the difficult thing is not to escape death, I think, but to escape wickedness—that is much more difficult, for that runs faster than death." These words make clear that it was the *jury* that was on trial for trying philosophy, and that a wicked deed was done in that trial.

Robert Payne
Greeley, Col.

On With the Show

This season's primary spectacle [Notebook, "A Dwarf for All Seasons," March] brings to mind that chapter in *Huckleberry Finn* in which Huck and Jim are joined by the itinerant con men who stage "The Royal Nonesuch." Today's hapless candidates seem to be engaged in staging an equally specious show. But the dwarfs are merely the "talent"; it is the communications industry which hires the hall, dresses the stage, and pockets the box-office receipts.

Six weeks should be ample time to alert the electorate to the fact that Richard Gephardt favors trade reciprocity and Pat Robertson favors the privatization of Social Security. But

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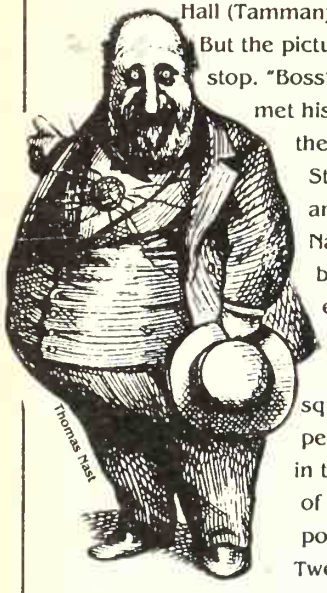

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the god of profits mandates an infinitely longer show.

I imagine the media would prefer to give us an all out David Wolper production of *Macbeth*, starring Sean Penn and Madonna, with real blood and state-of-the-art walking trees; but the current cast and political climate render this impossible. Gary Hart writhing like a caterpillar under a magnifying glass in the noonday sun was not much of a show, but it was better than nothing.

While the mummers play to an increasingly restive audience, the media stand around backstage like cynical impresarios cracking wise at the performers and counting the take, knowing that the tickets are nonrefundable. The media know that the audience's memory is nearly as short as its attention span, and so three years hence they can return and run "The Royal Nonesuch" by the rubes one more time.

Paul Rusdorf
Reno

What Is Work?

There is promise in the title of Wendell Berry's "The Profit in Work's Pleasure" [Readings, March], but alas, it is the same old pap. Instead of providing a fresh philosophical or theological perspective on the pleasure derived from "work" in our society, Berry concludes his dreary treatise by suggesting that we all go back to the farm.

Let's view "the profit in work's pleasure" from another perspective. What is *work?* Is it not *doing something for somebody?* I don't know about Berry, but I derive more real, *lasting* pleasure from doing something for somebody than by going fishing or hang gliding.

Berry extols the pleasures of having "taken part in the tobacco cutting" and "hauled a load of dirt." Yet in his sermon the "somebodies" are missing. Tobacco cutting is apparently pleasurable for every reason other than actually doing something worthwhile for somebody. Indeed, Berry takes pains to assure us that he is well aware that the somebodies in this example are probably unworthy folks. Whom the dirt was hauled for goes unmentioned, although we can assume it was for the barn animals. I suspect that that unspoken fact was the source of some of the pleasure that Berry and his granddaughter experienced. It's difficult to imagine that the granddaughter would have enjoyed the afternoon quite so much if Berry had decided simply to dump the dirt at the side of the "tree-lined gravel lane beside the creek."

The title of the sermon also promises that we might hear a kind word about the role of "profit," but that is not to be. Profit is what must be derived from work so that you'll be willing *and able* to do something for somebody again. Profit does not always have to mean money. It can mean pleasure, such as Berry got from cutting tobacco and hauling dirt.

Pleasure and money are not mutually exclusive forms of profit. Let's not be so gloomy about our modern, free-enterprise society. Let's derive pleasure or money or both from all forms of legitimate work by properly viewing work as doing something worthwhile for somebody.

John G. B. Howland
Glenview, Ill.

Sweet Smell of Success

Edward Abbey is a hypocrite. He says it's okay to kill deer if you *think* you need meat for your family, or if you can't afford to buy it neatly cut and wrapped [Readings, "Hunting in Earnest," February]. But, he tells us, if you can afford it, you should eat beef, happy in the thought that you are saving the life of a big game animal.

His concern for animal life is touching. "Let the wild creatures live," he says; kill the domestic variety instead. He believes it more noble to dine on choice store-bought beefsteak, à la James Garner, than on lean venison you shoot yourself. Never mind that the steak was once a steer that spent the last few months of life knee-deep in manure and pumped full of growth-stimulating chemicals, while converting vast quantities of grain protein into small amounts of animal protein.

Only a year or so ago, in another *Harper's Magazine* article, Abbey ex-

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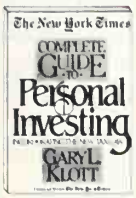

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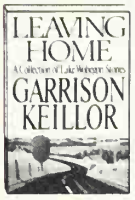

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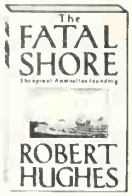

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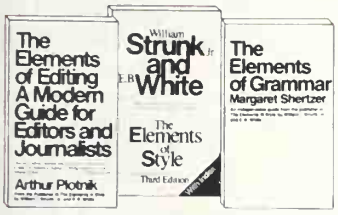
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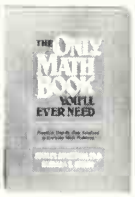

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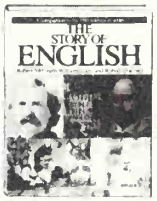

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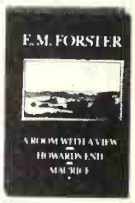

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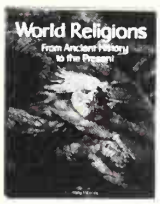

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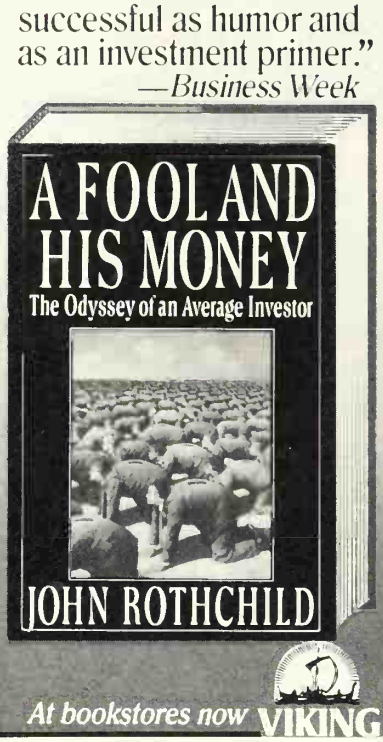

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coriated the entire beef industry for a variety of reasons, including his dislike of the stench of cowshit. This may come as a shock, Ed, but you can't have beefsteak without the production of a lot of cowshit. And the chlorophyll in the grass that goes in one end doesn't seem to improve the aroma of what comes out the other end.

Abbey writes well, but his brand of environmentalism stinks.

Steve Gallizioli
Phoenix

AIDS Memo in Dispute

The February issue of *Harper's Magazine* reprinted what has become known as the "Rund memo" [Readings, "How Republicans 'Spread' AIDS"]. The purported author of the memo, Charles Rund, denies he wrote it. In fact, the brief introduction to the reprint acknowledges this denial. But despite this caveat, *Harper's Magazine* chose to reprint the memo, presumably on the basis of "trust me" journalism.

I did not attend a meeting on AIDS two weeks prior to September 17, 1987, the date of the memo, because I was with my family on vacation in San Diego from August 22 to September 8. Because I was not at the meeting, I was not "terrifying," and I was not "practically foaming at the mouth." Furthermore, I have on many occasions exhibited public sympathy for the victims of AIDS.

My approach to achieving a public-health response to the AIDS epidemic is the correct one. My utterances on the subject have been rational, reasoned, and delivered with normal emotion. On no occasions have any utterances of mine scared anyone. I have been diligent in pursuit of this issue, but not in a zealous manner.

The alleged memo was not prepared by a consulting firm for the Republican party but was prepared, by a person or persons who are at this time unknown, as a fictitious document.

William E. Dannemeyer
Washington, D.C.

William E. Dannemeyer is the Republican congressman from the Thirty-ninth District in California.

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NOTEBOOK

Skywriting

By Lewis H. Lapham

The moment Kafka attracts more attention than Joseph K., Kafka's posthumous death begins.

—Milan Kundera

One of these days I expect to see the author of a new book parachute into New York harbor trailing clouds of blue smoke and playing "Summertime" on the harmonica. If the book promises big and best-selling news—of war or peace or the death of conscience—I can imagine the author coming ashore at Battery Park, resplendent in military uniform and welcomed by Lee Iacocca and a line of cabaret dancers.

It's no easy trick to drum up interest in something so easily misplaced as a book, and the writers who still nurture the hope of readers have been known to try almost anything to attract the attention of a camera. In a newspaper last week I noticed that a consultant charges authors $500 an hour for lessons in the techniques of self-promotion. Even if an author can write as well as Herman Melville or Edith Wharton, literary talent counts for nothing unless he or she also knows how to sell the book on radio and television. Some of the less delicate publishing houses now ask to see not only a manuscript but also a videotape of the author telling jokes and cautionary tales.

Under the rules of contemporary society, nobody, not even God, can afford to offend the media. It is all very well to be rich or talented or beautiful or brave, but unless one is known to be rich or talented or beautiful or brave, one cannot be a celebrity, and if one isn't a celebrity, one might as well be dead.

The nobility in seventeenth-century France felt the same way about the brilliantly lit society at Versailles. No matter how magnificent their country estates or how numerous their horses and servants, they believed themselves invisible unless they could make a show at court. But before they could appear at court, they had to know how to walk and curtsy and speak an artificial language that would fall pleasingly on the ear of a duke.

In our own society—a society increasingly obsessed with the flutter of images—the ladies and gentlemen of the media serve as courtiers in the king's palace. Unless one knows how to conduct oneself in their august presence, even the richest of businessmen or the wisest of authors must vanish into the pits of anonymity and ridicule.

Two years ago, by virtue of a coincidence as implausible as it was unintended, I found myself at what is known as a "media training session" for the chairman of a brokerage firm recently indicted for fraud. The gentleman had been invited to an interview on network television, and he was worried about the presentation of his image. For the modest sum of $10,000 his company had hired public-relations counsel to give the chairman a one-day lesson in studio etiquette. By the end of the afternoon he was capable of getting through five minutes in front of a camera without committing the theatrical equivalent of suicide. His principal adviser, jauntily hip in tennis sneakers and cardigan sweater, watched him safely out the door and then, smiling, said: "It's a wonderful world. Fifty years ago, I could have been teaching debutantes to dance."

I assume that the consultant to the literary notables offers more or less the same instruction—maxims about the simplicity of the medium and the need for short sentences, reminders about dictating the terms of the interview and keeping one's fingers out of one's nose, tips and hints about the pitch of one's voice, the color of one's dress, the reduction of a thought to its least common denominator.

Reading the newspaper report of the season's newest authors smiling anxiously into their hired cameras, I thought, sadly, of circus dogs dressed up in funny little costumes, rolling through barrels and balancing clocks on their heads. Something of the same melancholy feeling overcomes me when I see a decent writer talking to Johnny Carson.

Not that writers have much choice in the matter, at least not in America. The native audience for literature never has been large or easily found, and apparently it was never enough for a writer simply to write. The public has always preferred sensations, and it tolerates authors only if they can be seen as freaks and wonders—the sort of people who make scenes in restaurants, supply the newspapers with salacious gossip, discover miraculous cures and new religions.

The work of self-dramatization is as much a proof of the writer's art as the composition of dialogue and the invention of plot. Even in the best of times the successful American writers have adopted the gaudy disguises that admit them to the stage of the national music hall. Walt Whitman and Ezra Pound appeared as mad prophets, Henry James as the aesthete in exile, Mark Twain as a clown, Emerson and Jonathan Schell as preachers, Tom Wolfe as a dandy, Norman Mailer as a Caliban or *enfant terrible* who periodically revises the hideousness of his mask to reflect the conventional fear and trembling of the prosperous mid-

dle class. In the early 1960s, soon after stabbing his second wife, Mailer wrote, "If you can use a knife, there is still some love left." Twenty years later Mailer sponsored the literary career of Jack Henry Abbott, a self-confessed murderer and psychopath. The boredom of his audience required more violent stimuli, and when Abbott killed a waiter a few days after the publication of his jailhouse memoir, *In the Belly of the Beast*, Mailer told a press conference, "Culture is worth a little risk."

Confronted with the literary success bestowed on the memoirs of wealthy real-estate operators and notorious madams, the author who would be king stages his most elaborate productions in the theaters of self. It is the life, not the book, that becomes the object of art. The choice works against the writing of literature, but not many American writers have the patience or the fortitude to stay out of the publicity mills.

Foreign writers—perhaps because they can rely on the presence of an interested and educated audience—find it easier to accept the blessing of obscurity. I think of John le Carré and Milan Kundera, both of whom define the press interview as a synonym for a hanging. But with few exceptions (among them J. D. Salinger, Thomas Pynchon, and Evan Connell) the American writer is drawn, moth-like, into the klieg light. It is impossible not to admire his recklessness, no matter how farfetched his prose or how grotesque his gestures and costumes.

To appreciate the achievement of American writers it is necessary to bear in mind the odds against their enterprise. The republic of American letters is invariably in a state of anarchy. Without a canon of common texts or cultural references; without standards, lacking even one critic whose judgment pretends to the weight of authority; barely literate and always receptive to a bribe, the administration of the nation's literary affairs falls naturally into the hands of louts and thieves. The American public doesn't look to the arts—whether painting or drama or literature—for answers to questions that it considers important. It is an opening-night crowd, astonished by celebrity and opulent spectacle, willing to applaud whatever the merchants in New York and Los Angeles distribute under the labels of culture.

The writer is always playing against the house, and it's no wonder that he acquires the habits of mind congenial to the political left. It isn't that most American writers care for socialism or believe in the theories of a Utopian future. As often as not they despise socialists and prefer the dream of the Arcadian past.

What aligns them with the predicament of the left is the sense of operating behind enemy lines. Books have so little to do with the business of America that the author imagines himself traveling on a forged passport in a foreign country. He trades in metaphors, but everywhere he goes he discovers people who would rather deal in monuments, who delight not in the play of thought but in the displays of power. The vivid lights of the cities, the Babylonian architecture of the gilded office towers, the rain forests planted in the atria of the chrome-plated hotels—all proclaim the energetic faith of a people in thrall to the miracles of commerce.

Even if he has been outfitted with a trick smile and a new hat, the author cannot help but define himself as a guerrilla in the mountain wilderness of a lost cause, a romantic figure plotting sudden descents on the prosperous sensibility of the seacoast resorts. Possibly this is why so many American writers have distinguished themselves in the shorter forms of literary expression—I think of Bierce's aphorisms, Hemingway's short stories, Vidal's essays, Updike's paragraphs, Mailer's polemics, Plimpton's sketches, Bellow's sermons, Didion's metaphors, Styron's sentences, Heller's one-line jokes. Not that these writers haven't succeeded in the longer forms of the history, the novel, and the tract, but they achieve their most memorable effects under the cover of brevity. Instead of staging long sieges, they conduct brilliant raids. Sometimes the raids entail a criminal arrest or an appearance on the *Donahue* show; sometimes, on more fanciful or clandestine occasions, a parachute and a plume of blue smoke. ■

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HARPER'S INDEX

Percentage of 1987 congressional roll-call votes in which legislation supported by the President was rejected : 57
Number of years, since 1953, in which a president lost more congressional votes than he won : 1
Percentage of Americans who think that "many problems" are beyond President Reagan's grasp : 50
Contributions to 1986 congressional candidates that came from PACs formed by foreign companies : $2,400,000
Percentage of 1987 United Nations General Assembly votes in which Honduras voted with the United States : 24
Members of Colombia's Patriotic Union party who have been murdered since it was founded in 1985 : 600
Number of the party's 87 mayoral candidates who were murdered in the six months prior to the March elections : 29
Percentage of Brazilians who favor a return to military government: 38
Chances that a Brazilian worker is a union member : 1 in 4
Chances that an American worker is : 1 in 6
Value of all corporate mergers and acquisitions announced in the first two months of 1987 : $32,000,000,000
In the first two months of 1988 : $65,000,000,000
Amount the Japanese spent last year on pinball : $55,000,000,000
Amount the Japanese spent last year on defense : $30,000,000,000
Estimated Soviet aid to Cuba last year, per Cuban : $544
United States aid to Israel last year, per Israeli : $711
Number of Israeli soldiers who have been jailed for refusing to serve in the West Bank and Gaza Strip : 9
Number of the 30 Palestinians killed by tear gas since December 12 who were infants : 14
Amount the South Korean government spent last year on tear gas : $15,000,000
Percentage of South Koreans who are named Kim, Lee, or Park : 45
Chances that a teenage girl in the South Bronx was pregnant during 1987 : 1 in 6
Federal funds spent last year to promote celibacy among teenagers : $3,000,000
Average number of homeless people in New York City shelters and welfare hotels each day in 1987 : 28,000
Estimated number of vacant New York City apartments that landlords kept off the market during 1987 : 45,000
Officers needed to evict the last resident of the Memphis motel where a Martin Luther King museum will open : 4
Percentage increase, since 1986, in taxes paid by black South Africans : 500
Tons of gold made into class rings in the United States last year : 9
Percentage of 18- to 24-year olds who prefer President Reagan's hairstyle to Carter's and Ford's : 47
Number of jokes told about the Republican candidates on late-night network television in January and February : 173
About the Democratic candidates : 110
Average number of disclaimers a man makes before telling a joke : 1.9
Average number a woman makes : 3.4
Average number of words added to the English language every day since 1966 : 6.5
Average number of new microwave food products introduced every day in 1987 : 2
Chances that a restaurant bill is incorrect : 1 in 8
Number of Twinkies that Twinkie inventor Jimmy Dewar ate in his lifetime : 40,177
Pounds of mud for rubbing baseballs bought by major league teams each year from Burns Bintliff of Delaware : 182
Number of baseballs produced each year in Haiti, per Haitian : 1.8
Amount of U.S. humanitarian aid the *contras* spent on baseball and volleyball equipment in 1985 and 1986 : $1,245
Amount they spent on deodorant : $5,760 (see page 20)

Figures cited are the latest available as of March 1988. Sources are listed on page 76.
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1,000 SOLUTIONS

A Network For Rural Development

By Bob Bergland

America is looking for answers to tough economic problems.

One of the most acute problems has rural America in its grip. It's a story of loss . . . loss of jobs, loss of people, loss of federal help in dealing with problems, and an unraveling social and economic fabric.

The harsh toll from years of hardship in agriculture, mining, and the energy-related industries is mounting in communities throughout the countryside. And as the national economy undergoes major transitions, the danger that America's rural economy will be left behind is real. The trend is there, but it can be reversed. ■■

There is no single answer, but there are plenty of workable solutions. Rural electric cooperatives have been a catalyst for grass-roots economic development in thousands of communities for two generations. They are a ready-made network . . . more than 1,000 locally controlled, consumer-owned systems in 46 states. They embody the power of self-help in rural communities.

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Bob Bergland, *former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, is Executive Vice President of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.*

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READINGS

[Talking Points]

THE PRESIDENT'S SCRIPT

From President Reagan's private schedule for February 25, 1988. Attached to the schedule are "talking points" written by the White House staff to help the President prepare for meetings; Reagan sometimes copies the talking points onto index cards that he carries with him. The contents of this document were disclosed recently by ABC News Correspondent Sam Donaldson.

DROP BY MEETING WITH CEO'S

Time: 11:30 A.M. (20 minutes)

Location: Cabinet Room

Purpose: To brief CEOs of major corporations on the administration's budget initiatives and ask for their support. Also to discuss the INF Treaty and ask for their support.

Background: Support from the business community is important for success on the administration's budget initiatives and the INF Treaty . . .

Sequence of Events

11:30 A.M. You enter Cabinet Room, are introduced by Senator Howard Baker, and deliver remarks. At the conclusion of your remarks you open the meeting to discussion.

11:47 A.M. Rebecca Range will signal the end of the official portion of the meeting.

You move to the end of the Cabinet Room (under President Coolidge's picture) for handshake photos with the participants.

11:50 A.M. You depart.

Talking Points

—Let me start by saying thanks to all of you for coming today. This is certainly a much friendlier group than I faced at the press conference last night.

—I know you've already heard from Colin Powell on the INF Treaty and from Jim Miller on the budget package, but I would like to make a few remarks on both of these.

—First, on the INF Treaty, I'd like to repeat how important I believe this treaty is.

—It really represents a turning point in history. To actually reduce—not simply limit—the buildup of nuclear weapons.

—And to do that with the most stringent verification procedures in the history of arms control. Procedures that I believe will help pave the way to continued reductions in nuclear arms.

—It is a historic treaty, and I do hope I can count on your support to see that it is accepted by the Senate.

—Secondly, the budget. I'm sure Jim has given you the details, but I would like to make one thing clear.

—As you know, I did agree with congressional leaders on a Bipartisan Budget Agreement last November.

—It isn't a perfect agreement, but it is a good first step. The two-year agreement will reduce the deficit by a total of $76 billion. . . .

—Under the agreement we will balance the budget by 1994—but only if Congress shows some discipline, avoids unnecessary pork and program expansions, and fixes the budget process.

—They are now promising to deliver all thirteen appropriation bills on a timely basis instead of wrapping them all into one and dropping them on my desk at the last minute.

—That's great if they really do it. But we also need some fundamental process changes.

—A balanced-budget amendment and a line-item veto would be a good place to start, but there are other options as well.

—I hope you agree on the critical need to fix the budget process and we can count on your support to make some changes this year.

—Now, let me stop there and ask for your thoughts on how we can keep Congress focused on the deficit and the budget process.

PHOTO WITH WAYNE NEWTON

Time: 1:45 P.M.

Purpose: To thank Wayne Newton for his tireless efforts on behalf of America's military men and women.

Background: In November 1987, Wayne Newton graciously volunteered two weeks of his time to give a Thanksgiving USO Tour aboard ships of our fleets in the Mediterranean, the Arabian Sea, and the Persian Gulf. With this recent trip, Mr. Newton is the only entertainer to have traveled and performed in Vietnam, Beirut, and now the Persian Gulf.

Sequence of Events

1:45 P.M. Participants enter the Oval Office.

Brief greetings are exchanged and photographs taken.

1:50 P.M. Participants depart the Oval Office.

MEETING WITH BIPARTISAN GROUP OF SENATORS

Location: Oval Office

Time: 2:00 P.M. (30 minutes)

Purpose: To receive a briefing from these senators on their recent trip to Europe and their meetings with our NATO allies concerning the INF Treaty.

Background: During the Presidents' Day recess (February 7–14) Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd (Democrat, West Virginia) took a delegation of senators to several European capitals to discuss the pending INF Treaty with our NATO allies. . . .

Senator Byrd has requested this opportunity for the delegation to brief you on their meetings in Europe.

Talking Points

—Bob (Byrd), I appreciate you and your colleagues' coming down today.

—I know there has been a good deal of discussion in your hearings about the Treaty's implications for NATO.

—On that point, I'm pleased you were able to make this trip together, and Bob, I want to thank you especially for undertaking this and for handling your discussions over there so effectively. And I'm really glad that you made it to Turkey. I want to hear about that part of your trip in particular.

(Senator Byrd and other senators report on their trip.)

—I want to thank all of you for your input.

—The next several weeks will be critical in terms of your ratification activities on the INF Treaty, and I will continue to work closely with you.

PRESENTATION OF EASTER SEALS

Location: Oval Office

Time: 4:30 P.M.

Purpose: To meet and be photographed with the National Easter Seal Child and the Easter Seal Adult Representative and to receive the first sheet of 1988 Easter Seals.

Sequence of Events: Guests enter the Oval Office; Rebecca Range introduces each guest to you as individual photos are taken. Photos of each family are taken, then a group photo is taken. You make brief remarks. The 1988 Easter Seal Child, Shawn Dennsteadt, will present you with a plaque of the first sheet of 1988 Easter Seals and with a card and T-shirt signed by his fellow third-grade classmates at Hillside Elementary School. Then Shawn, who was born without hands and is missing bones in his feet and legs, will perform a headstand on his skateboard for you. Guests depart.

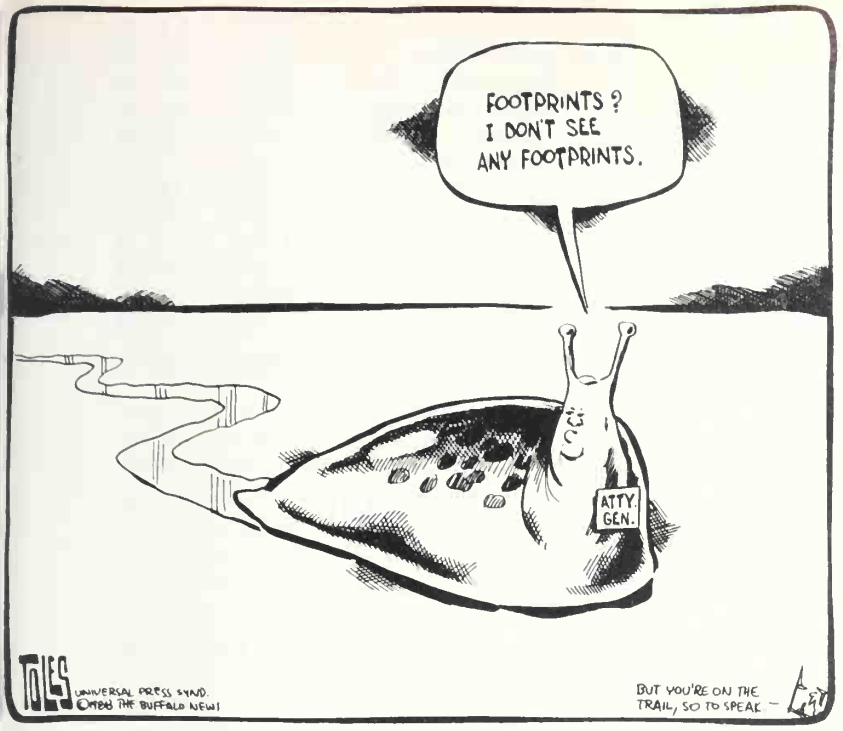
Talking Points

—Welcome to the White House as you continue your long tradition of service to this country's disabled citizens.

—Shawn, congratulations on being selected as the 1988 Easter Seal Child, and Colonel Cisneros (sis-ner-os), congratulations on being selected as the 1988 Easter Seal Adult Representative.

—You're both going to have a busy schedule over the next year, traveling all over the country representing the hundreds of thousands of disabled children and adults who receive rehabilitation services through Easter Seal facilities.

—Pat [Boone], I want to take this opportunity to thank you for all you've done on behalf of the Easter Seal Society. Your efforts have raised



From the Buffalo News.

thousands of dollars that serve thousands of people who wouldn't otherwise receive care.

—God bless you all.

RECEIVE REPORT
OF THE PRESIDENT'S CANCER PANEL

Location: Oval Office

Time: 4:45 P.M. (10 minutes)

Purpose: To receive the report of your Cancer Panel from its chairman, Dr. Armand Hammer, and to hear from Dr. Hammer about his plans to raise private funds for cancer research.

Background: Armand Hammer has served as chairman of your Cancer Panel since October 1981.

The President's Cancer Panel was established by law as part of President Nixon's war against cancer. The panel provides advice on how our nation's efforts to curb cancer should be conducted . . . Dr. Hammer will also present a valuable first edition of *The Leonardo Codex*, a reproduction of the notebook in which Leonardo da Vinci recorded his scientific observations, to the Reagan Library Foundation. Fred Ryan will be there to accept the gift on behalf of the library.

Participants: Dr. Hammer; Secretary of Health and Human Services Otis Bowen; Director of the National Cancer Institute Vincent DeVita; Senator Baker; Nancy Risque; and Fred Ryan.

—Thank you, Armand, for coming here to present the report of the President's Cancer Panel. I'm sure you'd agree that within the federal government there is no one more important in our fight against cancer than these gentlemen, Dr. Otis Bowen and Dr. Vincent DeVita, with whom you've worked so closely.

—As someone who has had personal experience with cancer, I know the importance of our research effort.

—Our budget will provide $124 million more for cancer research next year than we have this year. Can you tell me more about your efforts to raise $500 million in the private sector?

(Armand Hammer)

—Otis, what are your thoughts?

(Secretary Bowen)

—Armand, good luck in your efforts to raise private funds for cancer research. If we had more citizens as energetic as you are in the fight against disease, we'd have a healthier country.

—Thank you for this handsome edition of *The Leonardo Codex*. It will be a great addition to the presidential library and we appreciate your generosity.

[Expense Report]

SHOPPING WITH THE CONTRAS

From a letter dated March 18, 1986, from Robert W. Duemling, director of the State Department's Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office (NHAO), to Salvador E. Stadthagen, a contra *liaison. Duemling details certain "approved" and "disallowed" expenses incurred by the* contras *in 1985 and 1986. All items on this list had previously been disallowed "pending further review." Invoices were submitted to the NHAO for reimbursement after the* contras *purchased supplies on credit. The NHAO, established in August 1985 to distribute the humanitarian aid appropriated by Congress, was closed in July 1986. This document was obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by Peter Kornbluh of the National Security Archive.*

APPROVED ITEMS

Amount	*Item*	*Invoice No.*	*Price*
3 doz.	deodorant sticks	16913	$226.80
4 doz.	deodorants	16915	202.80
2	electric stoves	16927	1,572.38
1	dining-room set	16927	654.94
2	living-room sets	16927	1,283.63
1	sofa sleeper	16927	477.75
2	electric coffee makers	16955	195.00
3	TVs, 19" color, Admiral	17030	2,949.20
3	TV antennas	17033	541.40
300 ft.	TV cable	17033	108.00
3	volleyball sets	17033	421.80
12	domino sets	17033	132.18
3	electric coffee makers	17033	292.50
1	volleyball set with uniforms and shoes	17036	425.50
10	deodorants	17047	40.35
500 bx.	candy	17151	690.00
120 bx.	candy	17156	5,880.00
2,000	deodorants	17157	4,750.00
217	deodorants	17175	515.38
2 pr.	boxing gloves	17227	195.00
1	volleyball and net	17228	40.63
4	baseballs	17228	46.80
2	baseball bats	17228	127.40
6	deodorants	17229	25.20
2	volleyballs and nets	17243	183.75
		Total:	$21,978.39

DISALLOWED ITEMS

18	guitar-string sets	16917	70.20
16 btl.	whiskey	16925	120.00
2	TVs, 19" color	16927	1,966.13
1	iron for clothes	16955	45.50
10 lb.	meat for dogs	16958	2.50
12 lb.	meat for dogs	16972	3.00
4 sets	Christmas tree lights	16975	9.50
2	Christmas decorations	16975	21.60
10 lb.	jumbo shrimp	16978	85.00
15 lb.	jumbo shrimp	16987	150.00
12	tape recorders	16987	2,106.00
2	guitars with strings	16987	112.90
3	Christmas decorations	16987	32.78
10 lb.	meat for dogs	17029	2.50
40	guitar-string sets	17031	156.00
12	cassette recording tapes	17034	57.60
14 bx.	chocolate	17034	475.30
2 bx.	candy	17034	76.05
	Christmas decorations	17034	305.94
3	guitars	17227	176.25
		Total:	$5,974.75

[Leaflet]

VOICE OF THE UPRISING

From "Appeal No. 9," a leaflet issued on March 2 in the West Bank by the "Palestine Liberation Organization/National Unified Command for the Uprising." The National Unified Command is a political coalition composed of representatives from the three main PLO factions, the Communist party, and the Islamic Jihad. The Command has emerged as the most influential force in the Palestinian uprising. About 30,000 copies of their biweekly appeals are distributed throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The leaflet was translated from the Arabic by Daud Kuttab, a Palestinian journalist.

In the Name of God the Merciful and the Compassionate

No Voice Shall Go Higher Than the Voice of the Uprising

To our struggling people:

Your glorious uprising continues and your heroic confrontations with the occupying army and the cowardly settlers increase. You have cost them great losses and every day you have made progress. The Zionist slaughterer Rabin has finally admitted that our people are fighting a popular war. The occupation has lost militarily. The military machine has been unable to confront the stones, the Molotov cocktails, and the will of a people in revolt. Two-thirds of the soldiers who step on our homeland have to go to mental infirmaries for treatment.

Acting as a single and whole body, we are burying the American imperialistic conspiracy. The "hero" Shultz will only reap failure in his attempt to sell Camp David goods that the Palestinian people have rejected.

To our merchants and technicians:

Let us cut the economic veins of the occupi-

ers. *No to all forms of taxation.* The taxes we pay finance the repressive machines and the invading army of the occupiers. The accountants have an important role to play in this battle. Let March be the month in which our money, which has been stolen from us in the past, stops flowing into the treasury of the occupiers. We are certain that your unity in refusing to pay taxes will produce one more defeat for the occupiers, to be added to their other defeats.

To our people:

1. *Our factories must work at full strength,* so that we can produce enough to replace the boycotted Zionist products. These factories should strike only on the days that full strikes are called for by the Unified Command of the Uprising—the command of the PLO.

2. Clinics and medical centers should stay open all day.

3. The fines imposed on our arrested sons by the fascist Zionist military courts *should not be paid.*

4. We call on homeowners to show respect to our heroic people by reaching agreements, regarding the rent for the last three months, with tenants affected by the uprising.

5. The National Unified Command calls for the revelation of any attempt by the enemy to cause strife among our people by way of rumors, forged leaflets, etc.

6. The Unified Command calls on the employees of the civil administration and the police to resign immediately and to join the people in their popular uprising.

To the sons of the independent state:

1. We must use all available measures to *bring down the appointed councils of villages, municipalities, and refugee camps.* They are the agents of the occupiers. They missed the chance to resign before it was too late. Instead, they have insisted on being traitors to the people by serving the occupation and its goals.

2. *Sunday, March 6, is the day of the Palestinian flag.* Palestinian flags should be raised outside every home. The Unified Command calls on the Arab nation and Palestinians in the Arab world and everywhere to demonstrate solidarity on this day by raising the Palestinian flag.

3. Teachers, students, and administrators should go back to school, thereby defying the closure order.

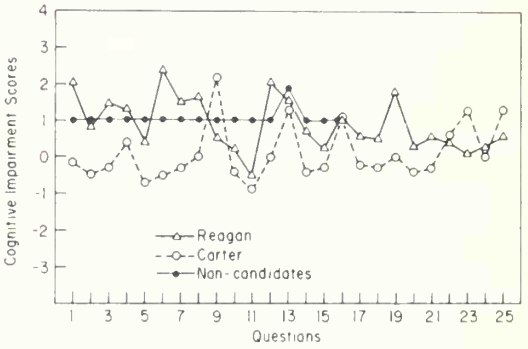
4. We call on our great people to conserve their money and to concentrate on essentials. Do not spend much and assist the needy.

5. Escalate the war of attrition against the occupiers, and cut off the road to settlements. *Signs in Hebrew should be painted over with black paint.*

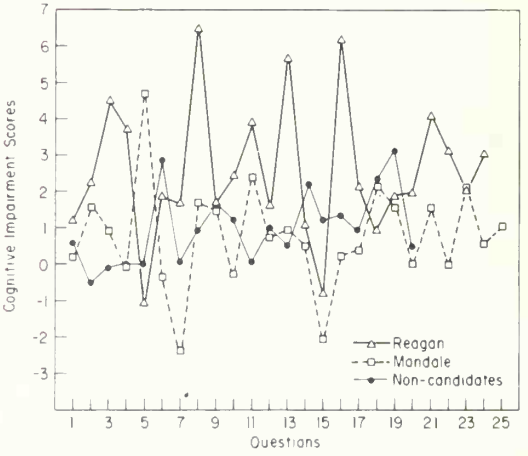
[Graphs]

A PRESIDENTIAL FLUBOMETER

Cognitive Impairment Scores in Response to Questions During 1980 Reagan-Carter Debate



Cognitive Impairment Scores in Response to Questions During First 1984 Reagan-Mondale Debate



From "Presidential Candidates and Cognitive Impairment Measured From Verbal Behavior in Campaign Debates," by Louis A. Gottschalk, Regina Uliana, and Ronda Gilbert, in the March/April issue of Public Administration Review. *Gottschalk, a professor of psychiatry at the University of California, Irvine, is the co-inventor of the Gottschalk-Gleser verbal-behavior analysis method, which measures cognitive impairment by analyzing speech samples. The greater a speaker's verbal disorganization or disorientation, the higher the score. Gottschalk and his colleagues applied the method to the performance of the candidates in the 1980 and 1984 presidential campaign debates. They concluded that "President Reagan had significantly higher levels of cognitive impairment . . . than President Carter, Vice-President Mondale," and the moderators and journalists who participated in the debates. According to Gottschalk, a score of four or above indicates "temporary or permanent brain-function impairment."*

6. Wednesday, March 9, is Martyrs' Day. It will be a *full strike day*. Everyone should go out in the streets to mark the fourth month of the uprising and to remember the first wave of martyrs. This should be a new day of anger against the Zionists.

Glory to our martyrs!

Long live the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of our heroic people!

Down with the American liquidationist plans!

Note: Anything published under the name of the "Jordanian-Palestinian Group" is the creation of the intelligence services; be vigilant.

We are victorious!

[Baedeker]

SURFIN' SALVADOR

From the October 1987 issue of the Surf Report, *a newsletter published in Dana Point, California. The issue has a special feature on surfing in El Salvador.*

Kilometer 61: Rock reef with good lefts and rights, breaks on all tides. Best up to six feet, then starts closing out.

El Zunzal: Perfect but mushy right-point break. Rock bottom but water is deep, so no problem whatsoever unless you take the rare left into the river mouth and shallow rocky water. This spot will hold its perfection in any size swell.

Rio Grande: Shifting beach break with rights and lefts. This spot needs a swell four feet or better to break. Not hollow, but very fun wave with steep, fast rides.

El Cuco: This is a very beautiful area consisting of approximately seven right-point breaks, all top quality. Winds blow hard offshore early and then switch sideshore to onshore around 10 A.M. Not recommended now because the coast highway leading to these breaks has occasional guerrilla activity.

Las Tunas: More right-point breaks like El Cuco with the same problems getting there. If the country ever settles down again to normal, these two areas are worth checking out.

[Pamphlet]

THERE IS A LIMIT

From a pamphlet distributed in March to Israeli soldiers in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip by Yesh Gvul ("There Is a Limit"), a peace group in Israel. Translated by Willis Johnson.

> We received orders—so they would feel the presence of the Army in the camps for the duration of the curfew—to knock on the doors, enter the houses, and take the men outside. We were supposed to isolate and beat the young men. We entered almost every other house. We stood the men outside with their faces to the wall, and as we questioned them, the other soldiers beat them with clubs. The men screamed with pain, and the women who heard them screamed too. Those who hadn't opened up [their doors] immediately were beaten more severely. I'm not speaking merely of a particular incident; this was the general directive from the divisional commander and his lieutenant. Other soldiers whom we met told us that their orders were the same.
>
> *—J. T., a twenty-year-old soldier posted in the Gaza Strip. From the newspaper* Chadashot, *January 27, 1988.*

Dear Soldier,

We are members of Yesh Gvul who serve as soldiers in the active reserves of the Israeli Defense Force [IDF]. Many of us are combat veterans and serve in combat units. Our political outlooks vary, but we are united by a deep anxiety about the future of the State of Israel.

Since 1967 the IDF has been changing, more and more, from an army of defense to an army of occupation. In contrast to the myth that this has miraculously saved the country, it has, in fact, proved that there is no enlightened occupation. Every occupation first affects the conquered, but participation in acts of oppression necessarily destroys the humanity of the conqueror.

Therefore, we have prepared the following declaration: The Palestinian people are in rebellion against the Israeli occupation of the territories. More than twenty years of occupation and oppression have not curbed the Palestinian struggle for national liberation. The rebellion in the territories, and its brutal suppression by the Army, clearly prove the terrible cost of continuing the state of occupation in the absence of a national solution. We, soldiers in the active reserves of the IDF, make known that we can no longer bear the burden of participation in, and responsibility for, this ethical and political deterioration. We proclaim this because we shall re-

[Signs]
STREET MANNERS

From a series of five signs designed by Ilona Granet. Granet is seeking approval to post 500 of her signs around Manhattan. Community Board No. 1 recently voted to allow Granet to post her signs in the Wall Street area. The sign at left was exhibited earlier this spring at the Museum of Modern Art.

fuse to take part in the suppression of the uprising and rebelliousness in the occupied territories.

As of February 1988, about 300 officers and soldiers in the active reserves have signed our petition.

MANIFESTLY ILLEGAL ORDERS

The idea of the "manifestly illegal order" has a long history in international law, as well as in Israeli law. In 1957, IDF soldiers were tried for killing Arab villagers in Kefar Qesem, near Petah Tiqwa. The soldiers killed the villagers while carrying out an order to shoot curfew violators. The court defined this order as "manifestly illegal" (in the case of Kefar Qesem, *District Opinions*, 17,212-214) and established: "It is prohibited to give or to carry out an order which is obviously illegal, such as an open order to kill innocent people in order to prevent them from committing a crime... Those who give the order, those who transmit it, and those who carry it out violate national law and exceed their legal authority and become liable to criminal prosecution... Open and clear violation of the law—illegality which pierces the eye and makes the heart rebel, if the eye is not blind and the heart is not closed or corrupt—is the 'manifest illegality' that is required to cancel a soldier's obligation to follow orders and to impose upon him criminal responsibility for his actions."

In fact, the soldiers who carried out that order were convicted and sentenced to prison terms.

On February 4, Dr. Mordecai Karmenitzer, former chief prosecutor of the Army, and currently a lecturer on military and criminal law at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, said: "Certain actions reported to be taking place in the territories fall within the definition of 'manifestly illegal orders'... Violence for the sake of deterrence—breaking someone's arm so that others will know that this is a danger, or just kicking someone—is indisputably manifestly illegal. In the case of a manifestly illegal order a soldier is not only not required to carry out the order, but he is positively obliged under the law not to carry out the order. Fulfillment of the order by the soldier would be a crime, both for the soldier who carries it out and for whoever gives the order..."

If you feel, as do many Israelis, that you want no part in the occupation and the oppression that accompanies it, it is your right to request transfer to service within the Green Line.

Don't struggle alone! For advice and legal assistance, contact Yesh Gvul: P.O. Box 6953, Jerusalem, 91068, or P.O. Box 4172, Tel Aviv, 61041.

Act now!

They both bring back m
But with the Sony, you

You can still recall that hot July day when your dad first took you out to play. How hard you chased the balls he gently hit. And how proud he was when you'd manage to get one back over the net. By the end of that summer afternoon, you knew you had found a sport you'd love for the rest of your life.

Sadly, as the years have passed, so have some of those early memories. If only you could have recorded everything with the Sony Handycam™ Video 8® camcorder. And now, as you begin to teach your kids to serve and play the angles, you're making sure you get the right equipment.

You're preserving their games o the Sony Handycam Pro™ CCD-

You chose the V-9 because it high-speed shutter of 1/2000 of a second can stop all the action w unprecedented detail. While noiseless frame-by-frame and slow motion advance make ever frame crystal-clear.

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mories of great games. ways get sharp returns.

Add to all of this, the Sony pre- sion Charge Coupled Device CD) image sensor for sharper solution and remarkable low- ht sensitivity. Now you even ve the ability to freeze the fuzz a flying tennis ball with aston- ing clarity.

The Handycam Pro is light- weight for quick court coverage. It has autofocus to keep speeding players in perfect focus. And a power zoom lens to zero in on everything from a smashing serve to a crosscourt winner.

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The Sony Handycam.

It's everything you want to remember.™

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[Petition]

A PLEA FROM CZECH PUNKS

From a petition signed by forty-six youths from Plzeň and sent last year to Czech President Gustav Husák. The petition first appeared in Informace o Charte 77. *Palach Press made it available to* Across Frontiers, *which reprinted it in the Winter 1988 issue. Translated by Z. Jetelka.*

Esteemed Mr. President,

We would like to inform you of a situation that is getting very serious for us. We are young people who like punk music as well as the associated clothing and appearance. Thanks to this we have been unlawfully persecuted by the Plzeň PS [security police] for quite a long time. We admit that the music and our appearance may not be to everyone's taste, but we are convinced that there is nothing in it to cause public scandal. We assure you, Mr. President, that we do nothing unlawful, and yet we are afraid to walk the streets or go to dances, concerts, and other cultural events—all this merely because the PS members don't like our appearance.

We don't provoke them, we might add; it is simply because we wear leather or denim jackets decorated in various ways, and have unusual hairstyles. They cut our jackets (sometimes very expensive ones, too), they tear our T-shirts, they shave our heads or cut our hair in such a way that there is nothing else to do but shave it. In addition, the PS often beat us for no apparent reason.

We must warn you, Mr. President, that such persecutions may and unfortunately do lead to tragic consequences when we simply cannot bear the pressure and are pushed to the very edge of society (mental hospitals, reformatory educational institutions, and even suicide in one case).

We threaten no one by listening to music we like or wearing clothes that appeal to us. On the contrary, the PS members abuse their positions and break the law. Can it be lawful to beat us and destroy our clothes?

It is for this reason we ask you, Mr. President, our highest constitutional officer, to instruct the relevant agencies to stop this persecution and to investigate the matter in order to provide the necessary remedy.

We want to live in dignity and without fear, and enjoy the same rights as other citizens.

We hope that you can understand.

[Dialogue]

THE LIMITS OF PERESTROIKA

From Capitalism, Communism and Coexistence: From the Bitter Past to a Better Prospect, *a discussion between John Kenneth Galbraith and Stanislav Menshikov, published this month by Houghton Mifflin. Last summer Galbraith and Menshikov, a Soviet economist and former member of the Central Committee staff, met in Vermont for ten days. Their dialogue is being published in the Soviet Union by Progress Publishers.*

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH: Let us discuss some of the changes currently taking place in the Soviet Union. For example, you've spoken of a new freedom for government enterprises.

STANISLAV MENSHIKOV: Recently, a law was passed giving government enterprises a new status in our economy. The main thrust of that law, which [went] into effect in January 1988, is to increase the freedom of enterprises to make decisions. Enterprises are now free to use their net income for capital investment, to pay bonuses to the workers, or to invest in the social sphere—schools, housing, clubs, cinemas.

JKG: But the decision to create an enterprise remains with the bureaucracy?

SM: That decision is vested in the ministry that oversees the plan, but once the enterprise is operating, it is free to make its own decisions. For example, previously, the enterprises looked to the government for capital investment. Now, capital investment will have to come from internal sources, and if those aren't sufficient, it will have to come from bank credit.

It is important to understand that we're talking about the autonomy of government enterprises. This is somewhat comparable to the autonomy that government enterprises have in some capitalist countries, like France and Britain, where they have nationalized certain sectors. It is similar in that the income earned can be used for capital investment—they are making their own decisions about the distribution of their net income.

JKG: What is the role of the market under the reforms?

SM: Under the old system, the enterprise isn't really responsible for marketing or selling what it produces. That is the task of the central authority. Under the reforms, the enterprise must become more market- and consumer-oriented. It must also find its own materials and machinery instead of just ap-

plying to the central authority for them.

JKG: Let's talk now about private enterprises. Am I right in thinking that the basic idea of the Gorbachev reforms is to encourage private initiative within the larger framework of a socialist economy?

SM: Yes, I think it is. We want to have more private enterprises serving those areas of consumer demand that are inadequately served by the government enterprises; the government enterprises should feel more competition from private entrepreneurs. In this way, we will be able to increase the supply of all goods and services.

JKG: Let me try to put that in concrete terms. If I become a Soviet citizen, can I set myself up servicing automobiles or running a laundry or a restaurant?

SM: You can either work on your own or you can join with others—in a cooperative or a partnership—to do what you propose. But you can't hire labor.

JKG: Do I have to get permission?

SM: You have to get permission from the state, and you have to pay for that permission.

JKG: How long does it take to get permission?

SM: I don't think it takes long, provided you are willing to pay the necessary fees, which may be high—it depends on the kind of business. You may pay a fixed rate once a year to operate your enterprise, or you may pay taxes on your income.

JKG: Doesn't that suggest that even with the reforms, there is still a reluctance to allow the individual to work on his own? He can't hire people, he has to get permission to start his business, and he has to pay a substantial price for that permission.

SM: Private enterprises that hire people to work are capitalist enterprises and are illegal in the Soviet Union. There is one exception: joint enterprises with foreign capital. These can be considered as a kind of mixed socialist-capitalist venture with a foreign capitalist or private firm in partnership with a Soviet enterprise.

JKG: Why can't you allow someone to open a restaurant and hire a few workers, or open a steam laundry and hire a couple of assistants, without interfering with the broad structure of socialism? The Hungarians do it; the Poles do it. Why isn't it permitted in the Soviet Union?

SM: We haven't had private enterprise since the 1920s, and there is quite a reluctance on the part of the Russian people to allow it again.

JKG: Doesn't this suggest that the Soviet system is a bit closed on these matters? After all, how is a restaurant keeper or a laundry operator going to damage the larger morals of the socialist state? You aren't afraid of them as capitalists, are you?

SM: Once this kind of thing becomes widespread, a new social class of small capitalists will emerge.

JKG: I can understand why you might fear a T. Boone Pickens, but I don't understand why you're afraid of the man in our local Vermont store.

SM: We aren't afraid of him if he works with his family or his partners. But when he starts hiring labor, there's no telling where it will

[Interview]

GOLDEN ARCHES ON RED SQUARE

From an interview with Petra Kelly, a founder and leading spokesperson of the Green Party in West Germany, in New Perspectives Quarterly, *Winter 1988.*

It's shocking how attuned Russian tastes have become to the blue-jean tastes of the West. People used to ask me to bring in serious books when I visited. Now, they ask for copies of *Burda*, the German fashion magazine, which has actually begun to publish in Moscow.

Recently I met a group of men leaving a Soviet prison. These men, with their heads shaven and still dressed in prison uniforms, snatched up the Marlboro cigarettes I had placed on a table. I felt utterly ridiculous, watching them suck in the smoke. For them, Marlboro cigarettes represent everything the West is about. That's their vision. And the first thing they asked me to do was thank Mr. Reagan for their release. After serving seven years in jail for supporting Sakharov, the first thing these men want is to smoke Marlboro cigarettes and say thank you to Reagan.

Perhaps most shocking is the planned joint venture between the Soviet Union and McDonald's to build a hamburger stand on Red Square. When I heard about this I thought, "Are people going to eat Big Macs and sip Coca-Cola in front of Lenin's tomb?" For years, we Greens have fought against the spread of that kind of cheap food chain in Germany. But when I expressed my disgust with the plan to a Soviet friend, she said, "For us, it is a sign of change in the quality of life."

stop. Today he will hire five people, tomorrow ten; in a couple of years he may have a hundred people working for him. A cooperative enterprise with only ten people is actually not much different than a small private enterprise that has hired labor. We believe that one of the advantages of socialism is that people don't work for other people, they don't feel like second-class citizens; there is no division between owners and workers, rich and poor. I don't see why we should try to re-establish the old division between rich and poor when the elimination of that division was one of the great achievements of our revolution.

JKG: In spite of the reforms, I still run up against a stone wall that cannot be breached—a wall that is called socialism.

SM: Socialism *is* a solidly built stone wall, and that explains the nature of the reforms. They are meant to improve socialism, to use its advantages, not to tear it down and go back to capitalism.

[Speech]

ACCEPTABLE RISKS: WHO DECIDES?

From "The Failure of the Environmental Effort," a speech delivered to the staff of the Environmental Protection Agency by Barry Commoner on January 12. Commoner, who directs the Center for the Biology of Natural Systems at Queens College in New York City, was one of twenty-four peer reviewers of the EPA dioxin report discussed in his speech.

Beginning in 1950, new forms of environmental pollution appeared and rapidly intensified: smog, acid rain, excess nitrates and phosphates in the water supply, pesticides and toxic chemicals in the food chain and in our bodies, and dangerous accumulations of radioactive waste. In 1970, pressed by a newly aroused public, Congress created the Environmental Protection Agency to undo the damage. Now, nearly twenty years later, the time has come to ask an important question: How far have we progressed toward the goal of restoring the quality of the environment?

The answer is in fact embarrassing. Apart from a few notable exceptions, environmental quality has improved only slightly—in most cases by about 15 percent in the last decade, according to government data. In some cases it has gotten worse.

Most of our environmental problems are the inevitable result of the sweeping changes in the technology of production that transformed the U.S. economy after World War II: the use of new, large, high-powered, smog-generating automobiles; the shift from fuel-efficient trains to gas-guzzling trucks and cars; the replacement of bio-degradable and less toxic natural products with non-degradable and hazardous petrochemical products; and the substitution of chemical fertilizers for manure and crop rotation. By 1970 it was clear that these changes in the technology of production were the *root cause* of modern environmental pollution.

In the few instances where production technology has been modified in response to environmental concerns—such as eliminating lead from gasoline, mercury from chlorine production, DDT from agriculture, PCBs from the electrical industry, and atmospheric nuclear explosions from military enterprise—the environment has been improved by 70 percent or more in the last ten to fifteen years. When, instead of changing the production technology, an attempt is made to trap pollutants in an appended control device—an automobile's catalyst or a power plant's scrubber—environmental improvement is, at best, only modest.

Take the example of smog, a pollutant that originates when nitrogen oxide is created as a result of the high temperature in modern automobile engines. But nitrogen oxide is not the inevitable product of gasoline engines; pre-war cars did not produce it. Today we can design a high-powered engine that does not produce smog. To do so, however, would mean retooling our auto manufacturing plants—and that would require a willingness to exert some social control over the means of production. Instead, we have applied palliative measures, and these have failed. For once we have agreed to the concept of an "acceptable" level of smog, it is an easy matter for industry and local governments to either weaken or delay the implementation of that standard. Thus, last December, after already extending the deadline twice, we gave some cities twenty-five additional years to comply with the Clean Air Act.

Unfortunately, our environmental legislation ignores the origin of the assault on environmental quality; it fails to recognize that environmental pollution is an essentially incurable disease that can only be prevented, and instead deals with its symptoms. I want to address some of the unrecognized costs of this approach.

The present—largely unsuccessful—regulatory effort is based upon a now well-established procedure. First, the EPA estimates the degree of harm caused by different levels of various environmental pollutants. Next, some "acceptable" level of harm is chosen (for example, a

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cancer risk of one in a million) and the EPA establishes emission standards that can presumably achieve that risk level. Polluters are then expected to introduce controls (such as auto-exhaust catalysts or power-plant stack scrubbers) that will lower emissions to the required level. If the regulation survives the inevitable challenges from industry (and, in recent years, from the administration itself), the polluters will invest in the appropriate control systems. If all goes well—and it frequently does not—at least some areas of the country and some production facilities will then be in compliance.

Clearly this process is the inverse of our preventive approach to public health. It strives not for a continuous improvement in environmental quality but for the social acceptance of some, presumably low, risk to health. In a way, this represents a return to the medieval approach to disease, in which illness—and death itself—was regarded as a debit on life endured as payment for original sin. In our updated version, we think that some level of pollution and some risk to health is the inevitable price to be paid for the material benefits of modern technology.

This approach presents many problems, but I want to focus on the way it leads to a dangerous confusion of science and policy. The very concept of an "acceptable risk" determined by EPA regulators takes decisions out of the public arena and, ostensibly, into the laboratory. Yet, unbeknownst to the public, the "objective" scientific process that is supposed to protect them is easily corrupted.

The story behind the recent news that the cancer risk associated with dioxin has been officially "reduced" provides an example of the sort of dangerous thinking fostered by our current approach to environmental protection.

The EPA has a standard of acceptable exposure to dioxin that dictates when contaminated soil must be removed. The EPA based this standard on a 1985 dioxin risk assessment that established the dosage at which the chance that exposure would lead to cancer is one in a million. The one-in-a-million risk standard is generally seen as acceptable and not likely to change. What *can* be altered is the specific dosage that is expected to generate the one-in-a-million risk.

For Syntex Agribusiness Inc.—the company liable for the dioxin cleanup in Missouri—the issue of an acceptable risk level, of course, involves enormous sums of money. According to Syntex, relaxing the cleanup standard from one part per billion (ppb) to ten ppb would reduce cleanup costs by 65 percent. Predictably, Syntex scientists have developed reasons why the 1985 EPA dioxin risk assessment is wrong. And as most of you know, a recent EPA task-force draft report develops a new rationale for a dioxin cancer risk assessment that shows the risk is sixteen times lower than estimated by the EPA in 1985.

To understand how the EPA came to this judgment, we need to review the scientific debate over the role that dioxin plays in the biological process that leads from exposure to a chemical to the appearance of a cancerous tumor. According to the theory currently accepted by much of the scientific community, this process has two sequential steps. First, a substance—an "initiator"—causes an irreversible genetic change in the exposed cells. In the second phase a "promoter" causes these now predisposed cells to proliferate and produce a cancerous tumor.

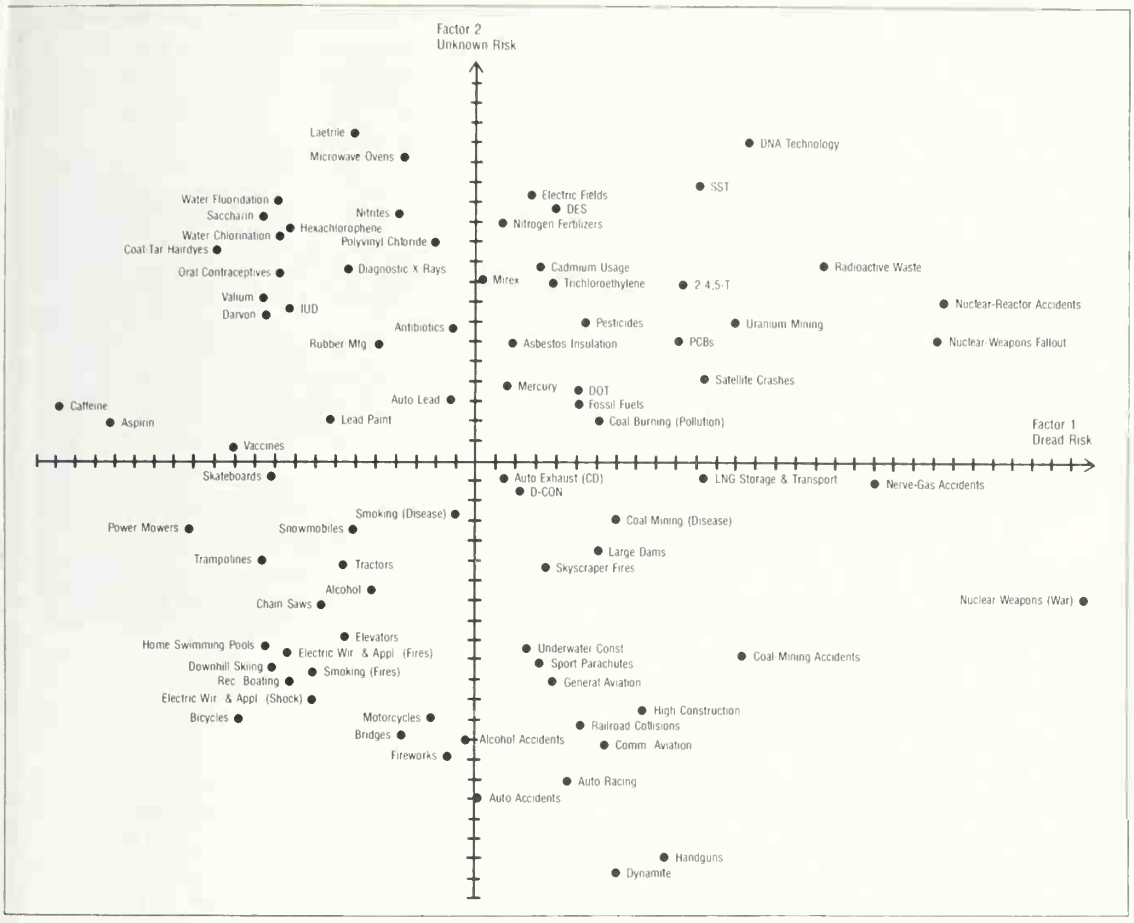
Mathematical models, based on animal experiments, have been developed to estimate the risk of cancer in people exposed to given amounts of dioxin. Some models assume that dioxin is a "complete carcinogen," acting as both initiator and promoter. Others assume that its sole role is as a promoter. In general, the risks computed from complete-carcinogen models are considerably greater than the risks computed from promoter-based models. The 1985 assessment assumes that dioxin is a complete carcinogen capable of both effects. The Syntex scientists, not surprisingly, claim that dioxin is only a promoter.

So the question remains: Is dioxin a complete carcinogen or just a promoter? Consider these facts: Rats and mice exposed *only* to dioxin exhibit a significant incidence of cancer; this implies that dioxin is a complete carcinogen capable of both initiation and promotion. However, dioxin lacks the distinctive property of an initiator—it does not cause mutations. But dioxin also lacks the distinctive property of a promoter—there is no clear evidence that it causes cell proliferation. According to the actual evidence, then, dioxin is *neither* an initiator nor a promoter. This means that the initiator/promoter dichotomy is not a sensible way to account for the effect of dioxin on cancer incidence, and that risk assessment models based on *either* of these assumptions are not valid.

Despite the fact that the EPA never reconciles this paradox in its draft report, there is a way to explain it. Dioxin greatly increases the activity of an enzyme that is necessary in the conversion of potential environmental carcinogens to active agents. Apparently, dioxin can sufficiently increase the activity of small amounts of carcinogens present in food, water, and air to generate the increased tumor incidence observed when only dioxin is given to test animals. In effect, dioxin influences tumor production by enhancing the activity of carcino-

[Chart]

AXIS OF FEAR



From the third edition of The Emergency Public Relations Manual, *a handbook for corporate and government officials involved in "crisis management" and "disaster public relations," published by Pase, Incorporated. This chart, created by psychologist Paul Slovic, attempts to measure the public perception of various risks according to two criteria. The location of each risk along the horizontal axis shows the relative degree of dread associated with it; the location along the vertical axis shows the relative degree of familiarity. "Understanding the emotions at work" can help public-relations officials develop "communications strategies that stabilize tense emotional situations."*

gens—the danger of which is best estimated from the complete-carcinogen model used in the 1985 EPA risk assessment.

But, clearly, the EPA did not take any of this into account. Instead, they chose the midpoint between the lowest risk assessment (based on the idea of dioxin as a promoter) and the highest (based on dioxin as a complete carcinogen). The result was a new "safe standard" sixteen times higher than the one derived in 1985.

The EPA's approach grievously violates scientific procedure. I can best explain my concern with a parable. Let us suppose that there is an animal in a closed room; from previous experience this animal is known to bite, but with an undetermined severity. A scientific task force is called to evaluate the bite risk. Opinions differ. One group says, "If we assume that the animal is a lion, and apply an appropriate mathematical model, we can compute that the risk from its bite is ten in a million." The other group assumes that the animal is a dog, and its model yields a risk of 0.001 in a million. The scientists engage in a bitter debate, and in an effort to resolve it, they manage to provoke some sound from the unseen animal. It neither barks like a dog nor growls like a lion. Finally—since the report is due—they reach a consensus: the risk is midway, logarithmically, between 0.001 and 10, or 0.1.

What's wrong with this approach? First, consider the decision to take the midpoint of the two types of risk estimates. If the animal is a dog, obviously it is not a lion, and vice versa.

This leads to the conclusion that at least one of the two classes of risk estimates must be wrong. But since the animal neither barks nor roars, *both* sides are wrong, which destroys the logical bases of both risk models—a defect that cannot be cured by averaging their results.

Eventually, some particularly hardy soul decides to open the door and actually look at the animal. It turns out to be a monkey, which then playfully slides open a door at the back of the room, and turns loose a roaring lion. Let me suggest that this monkey represents the dioxin-stimulated enzyme that releases the serious effects of the complete carcinogen, the lion.

I believe that the new draft report on the dioxin health risk fails to meet the rudimentary requirements of scientific discourse. However, it may be that this is not the proper standard for judging the report. It is not entirely clear that we should regard the EPA draft report as a purely scientific document, for the report presents its conclusions as an example of sound "science policy."

What can this possibly mean? Isn't there an inherent contradiction between "science" and "policy"? In the present context, the relevant attributes of science are, first, its demand for rigorous, validated methods, and second, its objectivity, or the independence of the data and analysis from the interests of those affected by the results. Policy, by contrast, is defined in *Webster's* dictionary as "prudence or wisdom in the management of affairs" and "management or procedure based primarily on material interest."

If the new dioxin risk assessment is a purely scientific exercise, then its conclusion that the EPA's 1985 risk assessment should be greatly reduced collapses under the weight of its faulty methodology. If it is, instead, a policy document, or some undefined hybrid, then it fails to meet a different obligation: it does not specify what "material interest" governed the outcome of the exercise. Was it the explicit interest of Syntex in reducing its Missouri cleanup costs? Was it the Office of Management and Budget's often-expressed interest in balancing health risks against the cost of ameliorating them? Or was it the interests of the American people in minimizing the risk to their health?

How can we remedy the environmental failure? We do know that the preventive approach is more likely to produce the desired results than the current palliative approach, which is based on dubious "science policy" estimates of "acceptable risk." The preventive approach has its own considerable difficulties—it requires a willingness to challenge the taboo against even questioning the dominance of private interests over the public interest. But at least the public would be included in that debate—indeed, would know that a debate was going on. Politics should not hide behind the skirt of bad science. We need good science, wise policies, and the honesty to distinguish the two. That is the necessary first step toward realizing what has been this nation's avowed goal since 1970—restoring the quality of the environment.

[Tips]

HOW TO FIND A BABY

From Beating the Adoption Game, *by Cynthia D. Martin, published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Martin is a clinical psychologist.*

Schools are a potentially great source of contacts for you if you get to the right people. Don't start to make contacts at the top. Don't contact the superintendent or the principal to ask permission to do something they would rather not know about. Contact individuals, not schools. Physical-education teachers are frequently the first ones to realize a young girl is pregnant. Make contact with the physical-education department in as many schools as you can. The school nurse knows about most students who get sick, even with morning sickness. She is worth contacting.

Talk to any young people you know. Ask them if they know about anyone who is pregnant. Tell them about your problems finding a child to adopt. Enlist their help. You can find young people to talk to all around you. Talk to the adolescents or the twenty-year-olds who live on your street.

Go to concerts that appeal to young people and try to talk with the people who sit next to you. Go to skiing movies or surfing movies and be friendly with those around you. When you eat, go to restaurants frequented by adolescents or young adults. The ice-skating rink, the billiard center, the video arcade, the youth-oriented dress shop, and the used-clothing store are all potential sources of contacts. Another potential source is female hitchhikers who are the right age. You have the advantage in this situation of talking one-to-one with a young woman who might give you a lead.

One million young women between the ages of fifteen and nineteen get pregnant each year. You are trying to get to one of these women at the right time so she will consider adoption as an alternative to her unwanted pregnancy. One of these million babies is all you are trying to find.

[Photographs]

JERSEY LIGHTS

From "Jan Staller: Recent Photographs," an exhibition at New York City's Lieberman & Saul Gallery, May 5–28. These two untitled photographs were taken in the Meadowlands of New Jersey.

[Story]

THE TRIAL OF ALLAN BLOOM

By Frank Gannon. From Vanna Karenina, *a collection of his pieces to be published in October by Viking.*

So we finally got him out there. We had to cancel sixth period, but that was nothing because, for most people, it was gym. So we get him out there, and we start talking to him, and he is just the biggest wienie in the world.

Jason asks him "what happened with your hair?" and everybody just cracked up.

Allan Bloom started mumbling about something and we all just got sick because we thought he might start "alluding" to something or get like that.

So Shane gets up and starts going on about how Allan Bloom likes to make everybody feel stupid. Like what's his problem? And that wienie just sits there with a stupid expression on his face, like "I'm smarter than you are, so there." What a dweeb.

Then Bloom gets up to say something.

"Today there's no distinction between intellectuals and non-intellectuals . . ."

That's how he starts, I swear to god. Oh, maaaaaaaaaaaaaan, I wish I had brought my Walkman.

Then he says that if George Washington was sitting here next to Mick Jagger, everybody would be interested in Mick Jagger and nobody would want to talk to George Washington.

Jagger? Mick Jagger? George Washington? Who ARE these people? Is this guy from the moon, or what? Why would anybody want to talk to either of these people? Who cares?

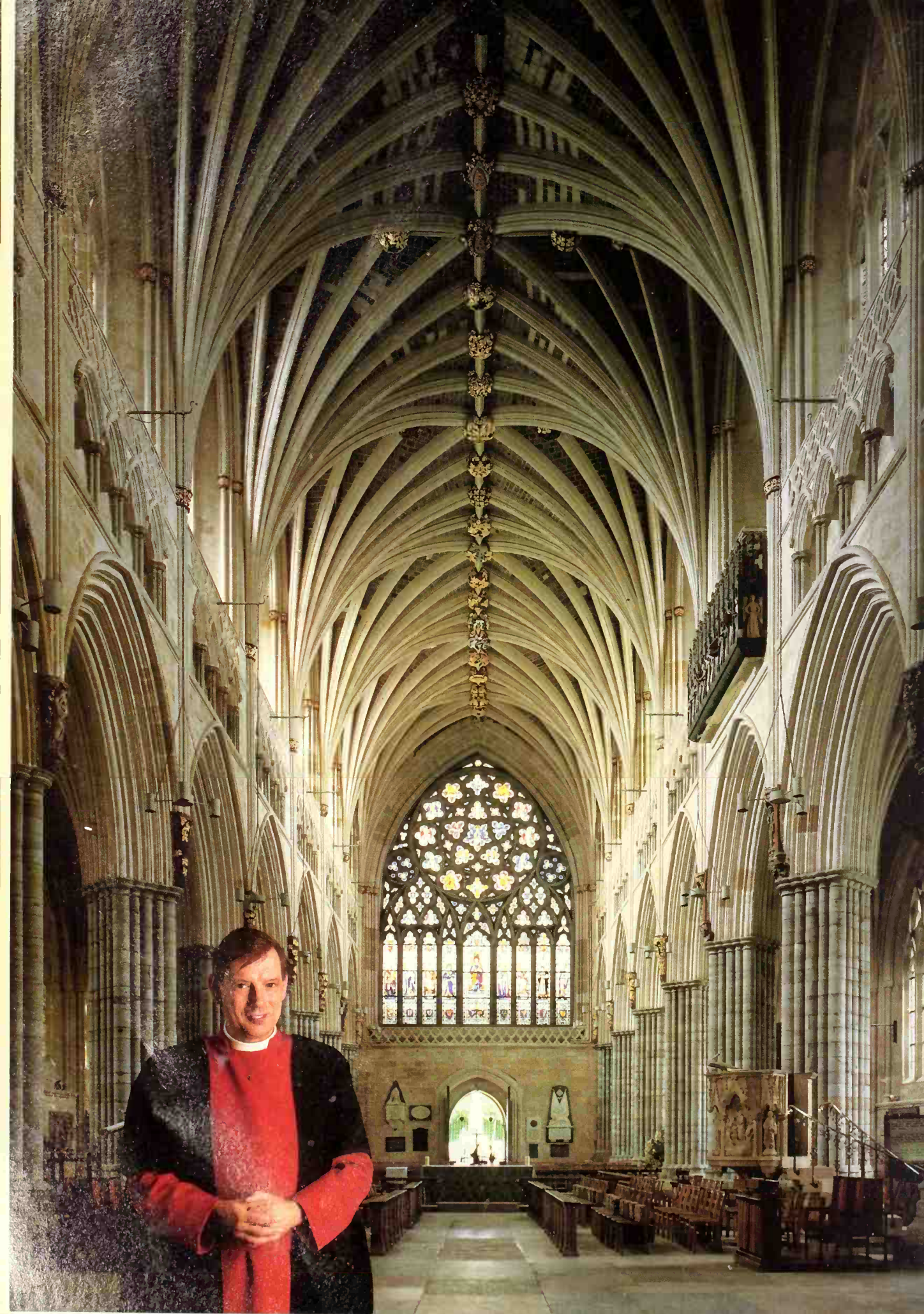
Why does this rejamoe have to go on like this?

Then he starts really getting into it. He says that the teachers aren't the problem. The kids aren't the problem. We all know what the problem is. HE'S the problem. If he would just shut up we could all go home, go to wrestling practice, whatever.

But, WILL he shut up? Doubt it. Doubt it very much, thank you.

"We don't think anything is more importan[t] than anything else. That's our problem. [We] think everything's the same. We're all afra[id] assign values to anything. We're afraid [to] that Beethoven is perhaps better than [the] Sister."

I was lost, for a second. All I coul[d]



England Once Had 10,043 Churches And Cathedrals, Until The Devil Carried One Off.

Early one morning, the unsuspecting villagers of Over watched in horror as the Devil swooped down and made off with a coveted prize—their parish church.

The monks from a nearby monastery also witnessed the hijacking. As the legend goes, the sounds of their pealing church bells caused Satan to suddenly drop his trophy.

But the Devil and his demons haven't confined themselves to houses of worship. In fact, legends and folklore surrounding them abound in every corner of the country. Including many villages which have buildings with no corners—rounded walls leave no place for the Devil to hide.

Even the megalithic ruins of Stonehenge weren't safe from Lucifer's pranks. According to one story, the Devil brought the stones from Ireland after tricking an old woman into selling them for a few pence.

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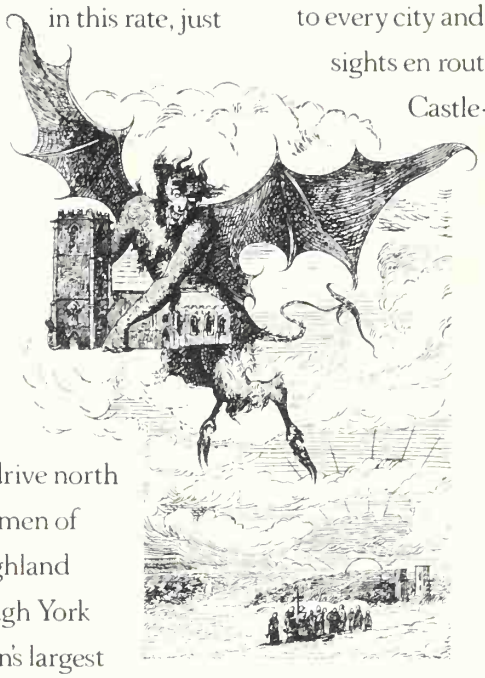

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If you happen to visit Exeter Cathedral (pictured left), speak to the verger. He might describe the secret catacombs beneath the city of Exeter. But when he talks about a church abduction, you may notice a slight smile. You may also notice that his fingers are crossed.

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was my car sitting in the parking lot. But a wall-banger group behind me started talking.

"Sister, man," somebody said.

Bloom looked at them and they shut up in a hurry. Todd raised his hand. Bloom gave him a little nod. Todd got up. "Hey, as far as I'm concerned, I'm happy you came here. We all are. Everybody is really happy that you came here. And I'd like to say, as president of the student council, that the whole student body understands your concern about what we're learning here."

Everybody understood that that was Todd's way of saying that he recognized an old-guy-in-the-eighties/professor-guy-in-the-sixties thing.

Now, let's book.

But, no. We have to have more. We need more. Sure. Let's run over until the buses leave.

"I was just like you are, a natural American barbarian. But I managed to get a much deeper perspective on life because I somehow dug into certain books that are essential to our culture, to any culture."

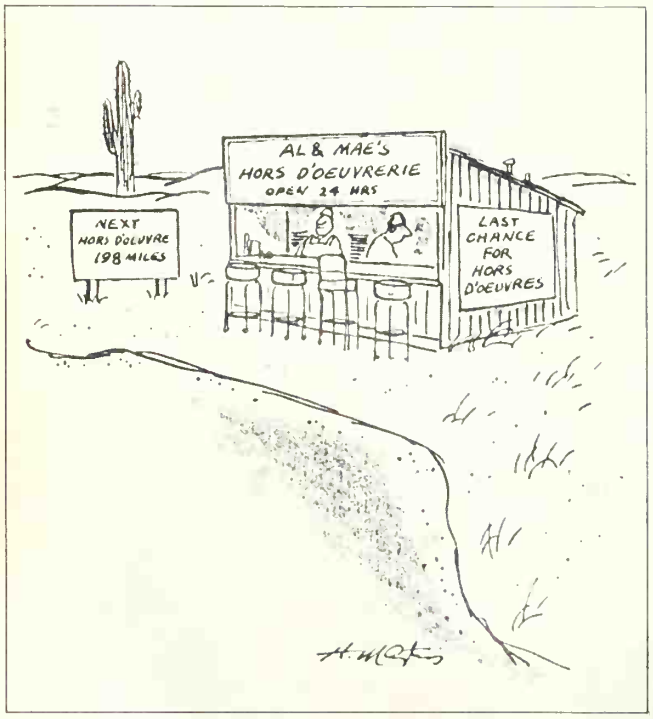
Now, we book.

On the way out everybody starts making noises like cows, "Moooo, Mooo." What a goof.

Jason yells up at Bloom, "Good-bye Perfesser, sorry about the closing of your American Mama."

What a trip.

Moooooooo!



From Punch, *the British weekly.*

[Introduction]

ELKIN ON STANLEYNESS

From "What's in a Name? The Elizabeth and Stewart Credence Memorial Lecture," by Stanley Elkin, in the Spring 1987 issue of Denver Quarterly. *Elkin's most recent novel is* The Rabbi of Lud, *published by Scribners.*

Professor Adams, thank you for your kind introduction. You're very generous.

Chancellor Jones, Dean Smith, members of the faculty, students, ladies and gentlemen . . .

As Professor Adams has already told you, my name is Stanley.

Could you be mugged by a Stanley? Could a Stanley rape you? Tops, I might molest your kid, but *you'd* never know it, and neither would she. What, a little suntan lotion rubbed along the bottom of her swimsuit like a piping of frosting around a birthday cake? What, a spot of spilled tea on the sunsuit, my finger in the bespittled handkerchief moist from what it wouldn't even occur to you was drool before it was saliva, and vigorously brushing across what won't be breasts for another half-dozen years yet, my grunt the two- or three-tone guttural hum of deflection, nervous and oddly dapper as the tugs, pats, and twitches of a stand-up comic, distracting as the shot cuffs of magicians and cardsharps, all random melody's tangential rove? Because how could you ever even guess at my intentions and interiors, my inner landscapes and incisor lusts, the thickening at my throat like hidden shim, the ponderous stirrings of my ice-floe blood, deep as resource, buried as oil in my gnarled and knotty groin, my clotted sexual circuits? Could put it past you plenty, believe me, holding the kid's shoulder, the little girl's, for the leverage, drawing her within the fork of my white old thighs, a pervert like a master artisan, fixing her there like a piece of carpentry. Or violating her in absentia, my eyes on her kindergarten picture, my snoot in her laundry, in her eight-year-old grimes. All contacts troubled, gone off, amok but deceptive, accidental, clever as a pickpocket's.

Protected by reputation, see, my triumph-of-the-human-spirit spirit, that heart of gold which I don't possess but people attribute to me anyway, mistaking cholesterol for karats, hypertension for love, innocence by association, by stereotype, dismissing me finally, all the world waving me through Customs like that guy in the audience at the nightclub whose lap the chanteuse sits in, kissing his bald spot, pinching his

Old McDonald had a. . .

. . . nightmare.

It's an American tragedy. Family farms are being driven out of business by huge factory farms. And that's not just bad for farmers.

This year in the United States over 800,000 people will suffer *salmonella* food poisoning due to antibiotics in farm animals. The poultry industry admits that over one-third of the chickens that reach the market are contaminated. Veal and other factory farm products have been shown to contain not only *salmonella,* but also a wide range of toxic drug residue.

Half of all the antibiotics sold in the U.S. are now fed to farm animals. This dangerous and irresponsible practice accounts for over $250 million each year for the big drug companies. Factory farms use antibiotics to speed growth and counter the disease-ridden conditions in which they confine farm animals.

Unlike the barnyard images evoked by childhood memories, millions of today's farm animals are forced to live in cages or crates barely larger than their own bodies. Unable to walk, or even turn around, the victims of factory farming exist in a relentless state of sickness and distress.

By depriving farm animals of exercise, fresh air, and wholesome food, factory farms are a breeding ground for disease. To keep the animals alive under such torturous conditions, they are *continually given drugs which are passed on to consumers.*

It doesn't have to be this way. And with your help, it won't be. Please join us.

Campaign Against Factory Farming

YES! Factory farms must be stopped from misusing drugs, abusing farm animals, and destroying America's family farms. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

☐ $20 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $500 ☐ Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

A free Consumer Alert pack is available upon request.

THE HUMANE FARMING ASSOCIATION

1550 California Street • Suite 6 San Francisco, CA 94109

cheek, and telling folks what a good sport he is, leading the applause.

Protected finally by all my grotesque cuddlies—the limp, the cane, my toothless, grampsy ways, my fatty's belly and threatless aura, my ducky's waddle and feeble's klutz, my *Stanleyness* on me like a wimp heraldrics. Hey, I'm kidding. Only offering credential here, only flashing badge, showing my hand, franked under the ultraviolet like a kid's at the dance.

Stanley is as Stanley does and you are what you're called.

Stanley is your brother-in-law, your C.P.A., your cousin in drapes. He collects stamps, washes his car, belongs to triple A, and keeps a weather eye on the gas mileage. He is, that is, as all of us are, the fiction of his sound, all his recombinant glottals, labials, fricatives, and plosives. He's his flaps and trills. He's his spirants, I mean. He is, I mean, the vibrations of his name.

[Poem]

ELECTIVE MUTES

By Lucie Brock-Broido. From the Autumn 1987 issue of New England Review and Bread Loaf Quarterly. *This poem won the* NER/BLQ *Seventh Annual Competition in Narrative Poetry, judged by Louis Simpson. Brock-Broido's first collection of poems,* A Hunger, *will be published this summer by Knopf. "Elective Mutes" is based on the lives of June and Jennifer Gibbons, identical twins who were arrested for arson and committed in 1982 to Broadmoor, a maximum-security psychiatric hospital in England. All words in italics are from the journals of June Gibbons.*

> *Nobody suffers the way I do. Not with a sister . . . But this sister of mine, a dark shadow robbing me of sunlight, is my one and only torment.*
>
> —June Gibbons

Tuesday afternoon, Broadmoor

I.

In summertime, when we were little, I
remember we
walking with synchronized steps, a four-armed
girl,
we've got everything
the same. We were eleven, a shadow & a
shadow
of her shadow. I am born
first & I teach my sister to be quiet.
Here's the secret:
One day we will burn buildings together.
One day we will set fire to great things.
It sends shudders down my spine.
In the heat of swing park, we will take boys
down & mingle with them in the brushes.
In a basket, we will float down rivers, Venus
rising infrared, you've no idea
what it's like to have this other
half. We floating like hothouse
fuchsia, two Chinese lanterns
through the water edge, a bulrush, shooting
stars. I will teach you to be perfect, more
quiet. I will teach you to be hard high self
mutilating. We will talk patois, speeded
up 78 on the record player, so no one else
can understand. We do, we know
the languages of hemlock, jimson weed.
Sometimes, my hands smell like sex.
That summer if anyone looked at one of us
we froze, like girls made of bloodstone,
crackleware. We kiln things.
We love each other like we grew
from the same set of pelvic bone,
as if we were attached like clethra
flowers to their stems.
We're budding now.

II.

We were sixteen & took to our room.
I & I are colored girls of history.
We do dolls, most are twinnies like we are.
I am the vicar here, the dolls marry
on the floor, kneeling on a red patch
of my mother's velvet dress.
We sing hymns we illuminate the hymn
sheets
in the colors of medieval manuscript,
the color of Mars, some nights bloodred,
the blue of Mercury, azury
like the sky lit up all over America,
a clear suburban summer
night & the lawnmower's stopped
& swimming pools are filled up
with the bice of night
water, a town in mid-America gone
mad, deserted. Someday we'll live there
when everyone's gone to the drive-in
& blonde twins are on the roofs of cars
or lounging on their sunchairs in the dark,
soaking
up their moon, all the convertible tops
are down & the speakerbox hangs
on the rearview mirror like a locust,
slow & distorted like that,
& you climb in back to have a boy
inside you, that's what I want, on the backseat
sprawling in the noises like an animal
he makes, but you're shy, you're bourgeois, you
talk
American which I sort of like but it's kind of
sleazy, you know?

But me & Jennifer are up here in our room, broadcasting
Radio Gibbons in the gloom of an English outpost of the R.A.F.
These are my children now.
From the Registrar of Deaths of Dolls:

> *Jane Gibbons. Aged 9. Died of leg injury.*
> *George Gibbons. Aged 4. Died of eczema.*
> *Bluey Gibbons. Aged 2½. Died of appendix.*
> *Peter Gibbons. Aged 5. Adopted. Presumed dead.*
> *Polly Morgan-Gibbons. Age 4. Died of a slit face.*
> *Susie Pope-Gibbons died the same time of a cracked skull.*

We forecast the weather from our room.

III.

Dear Lord, you have no idea
what it was like. *11 June 1981.*
I want a baby of my own, caged wren, tiny
trapped inside me like a blow of laurel
growing in a field, high & taking
from my own blood like an other only smaller,
someone I can call my own.
We to Welsh Hook & down into the barn.
J's lover, Carl, is there he broke
my virginity tonight. She
watched us, there was we
& blackeyed broken glass fallen
from the windows & a wild bird caught up
in the rafters, couldn't find his way back out.
Shrike: hangs its prey on wire fences, thorns.
This is what it felt like: for the first time
now I am alive. We did it
to the Stylistics, J watching
then we lay down heavy in the hay, heat
sticking stalks up under my blouse,
strawflowers, a resurrection weed inside of me.
Smoke: indicates confusion.
Fire: desire for escape.
Shoes off, summer night, whole world
smells of fennel, all romance
from the Book of Red Dreams:
Arson: indicates a twining.
Bitch: flammable, a lover.
Nakedness: perfection, fire inside thing consumed.
Sometimes we even dream the same, get that.

I burned it down today.

IV.

Without my shadow, would I die?
At school once, in a tuberculosis scare
when we uncurled our limbs for vaccination
ours were the only colored arms.
Pink pink pink pink black. I love
flowers. When we grow wild we are.
No one can hear us talk, we mute we shy.
The other girls are none of we.

From *The Little Books for Little Angels:*

> It is Christmas Day. The TV's on all afternoon. Lassie, Bonanza, imports from America. It is ten years ago, I have this dream. There are five children, blue-eyed little angels. There's a bird on top our tree. The TV's gone blue, all the stars of the show are Twinnies. My father in his big old resting chair. Everyone's dressed in Victorian clothes, as if there's been a wedding. White gloves & something catches fire. J is on her knees. We've come home from putting flowers on our mother's grave. She isn't really dead yet, she feeds us bloodpudding for supper. Everyone talking with no vowels. It's snowing hard & our house is getting more & more muffled. I've blue eyes, covered with lace. J & I are brides. We both have this disease of the lung. We are inseparable.

We'll die early & be stars.

V.

By the next summer, we'd bandaged our breasts
down so hard we could barely breathe.
High on vodka & glue, we both fuck the same
boy. Lupine, hawthorne, love-lies-bleeding
small violence of scent.
Something like magic is happening.
You've no idea how much I am
she. I am she. *Dear Lord,*
I am scared of her. She is not normal.
Someone is driving her insane. It is me.
Tonight she wound a cord around my neck
to strangle me, 6 *November, Furzy Park.*
She broke our ritual, she goes too far.
We take brandy from beneath our bed,
go to Gipsy Lane to walk.
Wolfbane, daphne, trillium.
Really it's more of debris
there than anything else, the river's drying up.
But tonight, everything is full.
It has been raining for days.
Everything is dripping
like pen & ink drawings, long & lean
as the blackened Modigliani faces of my sister's art.
We entice each other constantly
in these beautiful nights
after neverending rain—

First of all, I wept to God

—when world is wet & shy, under the bridge, I hold her
head down under
water & I feel her thrash
against me, just this once, I murder her,
it's a once in a lifetime thing you know?
You have no idea
how much I love her, I am she.
Sweet alyssum, larkspur, yew.
We kiss. Monkshood, nasturtium,
forget me not. ■

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Head Football Coach
Penn State University

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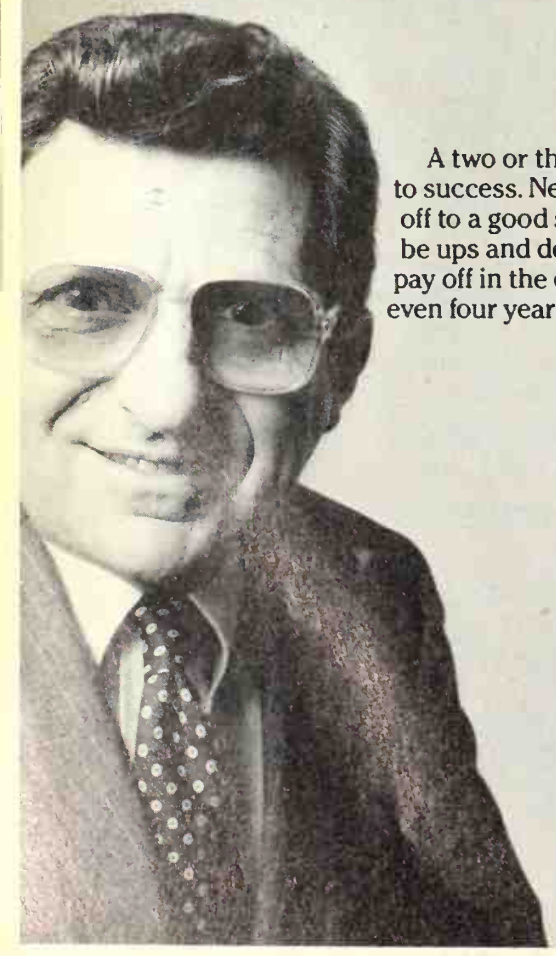

A two or three game winning streak doesn't add up to success. Neither does one great season. It means you're off to a good start. Real success is long term. There will be ups and downs. But quality play and quality living pay off in the end. Success doesn't last a season. Or even four years. It lasts a lifetime.

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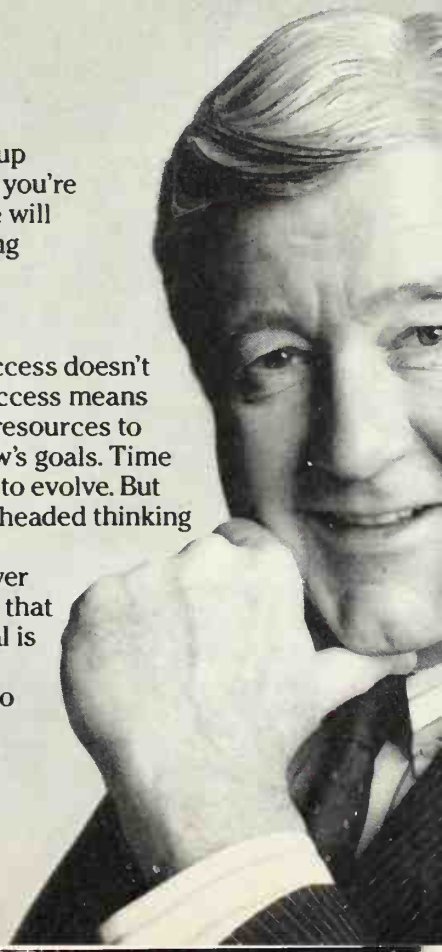

IN DEFENSE OF POLITICS

Against theorists, cynics, and the new historians

By Walter Karp

The poet at the writers' conference remarks over lunch, "I really don't care about politics." To which the political writer replies (having my rejoinder at the ready for years like a yellowing news clipping tucked into my wallet), "You may not care about politics, but politics cares about you." What follows is puzzlement and mild chagrin, then a shrug of deep disbelief: How on earth can politics possibly matter? I might have added with Emerson that "nothing but the brandy of politics will wake [Americans] from brute life," but enough was enough.

At a fashionable dinner party a rising young journalist says that the one serious defect of his newspaper is that it never deals with "deeper social forces." It merely reports what high-ranking officials say and do every day. The fashionable diners nod sagely, for what could be more inoffensive than a social force? A few years later the rising young journalist becomes one of the most conspicuous sycophants in the White House press corps, sensibly casting his lot with high-ranking officials.

A public figure of national notoriety telephones me—a complete stranger—to ask, in a tone of intense vexation, how could I possibly write that professional politicians have power in America? The idea is absurd, ridiculous. He had never heard an educated person say such a thing. The Pentagon has power, corporations have power, special interests of all kinds have power, but mere groveling *elected* officials? Never, never, never.

When my caller hung up I felt a sharp pang of discouragement. I had just published a book about party politics in America, which demonstrated, so I fondly thought, that the ambitions of party establishments were far deeper, far darker, and far more consequential than we commonly suppose. But my

Walter Karp, a Harper's Magazine *contributing editor, is the author of* Liberty Under Siege, *a history of the Carter-Reagan era, to be published this fall by Henry Holt.*

The Founding Fathers contradict at every point the grand governing maxim of our contemporary political discourse

unexpected caller reminded me painfully that I had not made the slighte dent in the fundamental maxim of modern American political thinking, wit: The politicians who actually exercise power, who burn with ambitio to exercise it, who toil and suffer for the chance, are precisely the peop with no real power at all. This grand maxim is wonderfully capacious. Th entire political spectrum fits into its maw—the dour "radical" who thin politicians the servile creatures of capitalism; the cheery apologist wh thinks them the servile creatures of a sovereign people; the intermedia sorts who regard them, variously, as the servile creatures of "PACs," th servile creatures of "the military-industrial complex," the servile creatur of "the media," of "liberal activists," of "special-interest groups," the too of the "permanent government," and the pawns of the "decision-makin process." Politicians' doings are said to be mere effects of "the causal prima cy of socio-economic processes," according to the illuminati of poli sci– the campus travesty of any true science of politics. "They're only in it fo the money," say the benighted many, genuinely trying to understand wh those who are said to matter so little would work so hard for the chance no to matter.

The question that urgently needs answering is this: How have so man influential people—historians, social scientists, journalists, the teachers o our children and our youth—managed to reach such an extraordinary con clusion about politics in America? How has the sweeping maxim manage to achieve so powerful a grip on our thinking? For what makes the victor of this maxim truly astonishing is that it stands in starkest contrast to th political understanding of the Americans we are said to revere, to venerate to look upon as gods and demigods. I mean, of course, the Founders of th Republic we inhabit. The Founders believed with the utmost intensity i the power of those who exercised power and feared more than anything els their ambition to grasp more of it. They thought life offered nothing quit so sweet and tempting to men of ambition as political power withou check; power without law; power liberated from the people, their judg ment, their suffrage, and their liberties. "That monster, the lust of un lawful authority," thunders "the Watchman" in a 1758 issue of the *Pennsyl vania Journal*. "Ambition and lust of power above the law," cries Samue Adams, are "predominant passions in the breasts of most men." Inspirer o lustful, lawless ambition, political power is menacing, encroaching, "eve prone to wantonness," say the Founders. "Like the ocean," they say, "lik a cancer," like jaws "always opened to devour" public liberty. *Obsta princi pii* is the revolutionary watchword, which John Adams translates thusly "Nip the shoots of arbitrary power in the bud." Watch for it in the execu tive, warns a Delaware Whig, for "the Executive power is ever restless ambitious, and ever grasping at increase of power." Watch for it, too, i foreign affairs, for "perhaps it is a universal truth," writes James Madison "that the loss of liberty at home is to be charged to provisions against dan ger, real or pretended, from abroad."

Elections and constitutions guarantee nothing. "Every government de generates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone," warns Thoma Jefferson. "Unfaithful agents" of the voters are ready to spring up at the firs opportunity. The lust for unchecked power breeds the will to oligarchy "Every one takes his side in favor of the many, or of the few," Jefferso points out to Adams. And how quick are the prideful few to batten on th passive many! The people themselves need courage and pride; above al they must exercise the keenest watchfulness and maintain "a virtuous jeal ousy of public men and public measures, which was wont to scrutinize no only actions, but motives," advises a revolutionary writer. "If once the become inattentive to the public affairs," Jefferson writes to a colleague "you and I, and Congress and Assemblies, Judges and Governors, shall al become wolves."

Thus our "venerated" Founders, who contradict at every point the gran governing maxim of our contemporary political discourse. Are they not, i

Details of paintings by Oscar de Mejo, courtesy of Aberbach Fine Art and John Locke Studios, In

truth, besotted, infatuated, frightened of figments, obsessed by bogeys? Are they not guilty of that most unforgivable of political sins—conspiratorial thinking? So they would appear in the light of the new orthodoxy.

Listen to the voices of this orthodoxy: "History is always on the move," writes the eminent political scientist Seymour Martin Lipset, author of *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics*. Americans who cannot understand this seminal truth about "history" falsely blame their troubles "on the manipulations of the few," says Lipset, and fall into "the politics of unreason"—what the late Richard Hofstadter termed "the paranoid style in American politics"—and commit the political crime of trying "to turn back history." Like the entire generation of the Revolution, which believed that "when in the course of human events" the oppressive "manipulations of the few" threaten to snuff out liberty, it is the right and duty of the people "to turn back history" and make a fresh start. And so they did, and they won for their deeds undying glory, undying reverence, undying veneration—and the utter obliteration of their political understanding. The unvenerated legions of the Lipsets stand triumphant while the venerated Founders of our Republic are dead to our world.

To the question, how could this possibly have happened, the answer, I fear, is woefully circular. For we need the political understanding of the Founders to grasp why their republican political understanding has been banished from the republic they founded. We must grasp the fact of ambition before we can understand the lust to wield power usurped from the people. Only then can we begin to see that there is no safer way to usurp power in a democratic republic than to make the impotence of the powerful the common doctrine of the country.

"The favorite opinions of people in power are the opinions which favor their own power." Thus James Mill, father of John Stuart, wrote in 1824, before the murk of modern political thinking had thickened into darkness and settled over power and ambition like a vast, all-concealing cloak.

The murk of modern political thinking has settled over power and ambition like a vast, all-concealing cloak

Tocqueville is one of the first to detect this "dangerous tendency" of modern thought. What alarms him is the new "democratic" way of writing history, so he relates in the second volume of *Democracy in America*, which appeared in 1840. The new historians, says Tocqueville, thinking of Hegel, perhaps, and his followers, "attribute hardly any influence to the individual over the destiny of the race, nor to citizens over the fate of a people; but, on the other hand, they assign great general causes to all petty incidents." Instead of relating the shaping deeds of powerful individuals, the new historian "denies their existence. He prefers talking about the characteristics of race, the physical conformation of the country, or the genius of civilization"—or, though in 1840 this lies just beyond even Tocqueville's purview, the all-powerful forces of production.

Herodotus, the "father of history," said that he wrote *The Persian Wars* so "that the great deeds of men may not be forgotten." So it has been with history in general. It is the story, or stories, of the diverse deeds of humankind. Discovered during the Greek experience of freedom, history's innermost subject is freedom: our human capacity to act, to make a fresh start, to break free of mere habit and rote—in short, to create and exercise power. Yet this very capacity to act is being "lost sight of," warns Tocqueville. To the writers of this new history, action no longer accounts for historic change. By a strange revolution of thought, social change is said to account for action. Society or economics or even "history" itself orders and causes our conduct, reducing it to mere motion, habit, and rote, snuffing out the very idea of freedom and power. This is the "dangerous tendency" of the new history: "Men are led to believe that this movement [of society] is involuntary, and that societies unconsciously obey some superior force ruling over them." All are conceived as mere creatures of socio-economic circumstance, prime ministers as well as peasants, princes as well as paupers.

The twentieth century is terrifying in its revelation of the power of deeds, and yet, astonishingly, it makes no dent in the new history

The new historians "deprive the people themselves of the power of modif ing their own condition, and they subject them either to an inflexib Providence, or to some blind necessity." To the new historians of 184("man is utterly powerless over himself and over all around him. The hist(rians of antiquity taught how to command: those of our time teach on how to obey."

What a bitter irony this is for the American Republic. Jefferson warr that it must inevitably "degenerate" unless the American people ar schooled in history, which "by apprizing them of the past . . . will qualif them as judges of the actions and designs of men; it will enable them t know ambition under every disguise it may assume; and knowing it, to d feat its views." How could Jefferson have foreseen in 178 that history, instead of unmasking ambition, was soon t become ambition's most impenetrable disguise?

The new history proves to be no intellectual triumph. It is a pro gram, an agenda, a prescribed rule of thought.

All economic explanations of nineteenth-century imperialism, notes th critic George Lichtheim in a 1970 essay in *Commentary*, have utterly faile to explain modern imperialism. After sixty-five years of abject failure, how ever, Lichtheim waits like Micawber for a more sophisticated economi explanation to turn up, one that will continue to exclude, he says, "incal culable political and personal factors." What possible role can politics pla in the expansion of a country's political sway? None will be allowed.

The Vietnam War, notes Christopher Lasch, had its "roots in the socia structure of advanced capitalism (roots which have yet, however, to b fully explained)." Apparently, he too will wait like Micawber for someon to "fully" explain how the "social structure" caused President Johnson t bomb North Vietnam after that same social structure failed six years earlie to do anything of the kind to President Eisenhower.

The history that likens princes to paupers seems impervious to failure "Scholars have been unable to formulate a consensus on the reason for th Bolsheviks' rapid rise to power," a reviewer notes in a 1983 issue of th *American Historical Review*. "We simply do not have, as yet, a compellin interpretation of Fascism," writes another historian in the *Review*. Com menting on a new volume of essays on American foreign affairs sinc World War II, the distinguished historian Norman Graebner notes in th April 1987 *Review* that "none of the essays in this volume explain precisel how the tendencies to globalize American purposes came to dominate th official outlook of the United States" soon after the war.

The entire twentieth century mocks this nineteenth-century history tha teaches "only how to obey." The century is terrifying in its revelation o the power of deeds and the lust for dominion, and yet, astonishingly, i makes no dent in the new history. "Comrade Stalin, having become gener al secretary, has concentrated boundless power in his hands," the ailin Lenin warns his fellow Bolsheviks in his final testament. "This circum stance may seem an insignificant trifle," adds Lenin, who seems trappe between his piercing political sense, on one hand, and the stupefying doc trine of "historical necessity" on the other. Yet "it is a trifle that may tak on decisive significance." He calls for Stalin's removal from the secretary ship. So Comrade Stalin makes sure that the great leader's dangerous testa ment does not see the light of day in the Soviet Union. What did Leni suppose? That a man who "concentrated boundless power in his hands would let a scrap of paper stand in his way? Did Lenin, who knew bette than to wait for the "laws of history" to produce a communist revolution nevertheless think that Comrade Stalin had acquired boundless persona power without ruthlessly lusting for that power?

Cupiditas principii, the lust for personal supremacy, never dies out, bu neither does the writing of history that makes light of its terrible force. Th first half of the century "uproots, enslaves, or kills 75 million human be

ngs," Albert Camus estimates in 1951. We suffer global wars and revolutionary upheavals. We see tyrants commit unprecedented crimes of state; order whole classes and races exterminated. We see despots mold with force and terror those "socio-economic processes" which supposedly rule over all. The history that teaches "only how to obey" should have been blown to smithereens. The effacement of power and politics, of action and ambition, should have been exposed as a delusion, a folly, and worse—a vast system of political concealment. "The question for brave men," writes G. K. Chesterton in protest against the new deedless history, "is not whether a certain thing is increasing; the question is whether we are increasing it." But it seems we are no longer sufficiently brave. The more the new history wraps political power in darkness, the more influential it grows.

By making politics and thought itself mere functions of social and economic causes, the new history transforms the science of politics into poli sci, which holds as its virtually unquestioned axiom that whatever happens in government and politics must be attributed to forces, factors, actors, influences, sanctions, pressures, and constraints emanating from outside the public realm itself. From within it virtually nothing can come. On its own it is utterly inanimate, like a sailing ship becalmed. According to Montesquieu, Rome's senate oligarchy started wars "to distract [the people] from their unrest by occupying them abroad." According to poli sci such a *political* determination of a political deed is not to be thought of, and alas, it is not. In the mental world of this campus travesty, power and ambition have been concealed completely. Such is its function. "It helps to cover political relations with the veil of ideologies," the German-born scholar Hans Morgenthau warned three decades ago. Political science assumes "a determinism which minimizes the active role of men," so the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr warned around the same time. To little avail. Poli sci rolls along heedlessly on its appointed rounds, devouring our republican political understanding like voracious army ants on the march, opening a path for the belittlement of our revered and venerated Founders and of the republican tradition itself.

Poli sci rolls along heedlessly on its appointed rounds, devouring our republican political understanding like voracious army ants on the march

Thus we learn from Hofstadter—whose 1948 work *The American Political Tradition* is studied to this day in thousands of colleges and high schools throughout the country, including my sixteen-year-old daughter's—that, in fact, America has no political tradition of the slightest consequence since Americans all agree on the one question that allegedly matters: We do not want state ownership of the means of production. We learn, too, that Jefferson's struggle against the Federalist oligarchy was a conflict "between two kinds of property, not two kinds of philosophy"; that Lincoln's translation of the slave question into the great principles of liberty and equality "entitles him to a place among the world's great political propagandists"; that what passes for political conflict in America is mainly mewling about social status.

Thus we learn from Louis Hartz's *The Liberal Tradition in America*—another immensely influential work—that, since America lacked a feudal aristocracy on one hand and a socialist party on the other, our political tradition is a mere harmless blob of middle-class "consensus." Thus we learn from Daniel Boorstin's *The Genius of American Politics*—yet another immensely influential work by a future Librarian of Congress—that the American political tradition is supremely pragmatic and free of ideology. As if we had not launched a revolution to forestall a distant tyranny, nor fought a civil war over the extension of slavery, nor entered the carnage of a European war "to make the world safe for democracy."

Thus we may learn from John Diggins's *The Lost Soul of American Politics*—a highly praised work of 1984—that the Founders' obsession with lawless power, lust for power, and tyrannical power was mainly "the rhetoric of accusation," and "an expedient rhetoric and polemic" not to be taken too seriously; that America since the Civil War has been a secular, soulless

And what is the response of our historians to this stunning revival of republican truths, republican struggles?

"liberal society dedicated to nothing more than the pursuit of self-interests and the pleasures of consumption." As if Americans had not fought and died in five foreign wars—all of them "idealistic," four of them readily avoidable—*since* we lost our "souls" and immersed ourselves in mere private profit and pleasure. What careless contempt for our history marks this ingrained habit of belittlement.

It seems to me that a kind of blind passion directs the assault on our republican political understanding. That which is supposedly a trifle, a figment, or mere propaganda, nevertheless inspires deep fear and loathing, thereby revealing its reality and force.

After World War II, for example, the Marxian version of the new history fell from favor, a victim of Cold War politics. Yet no historical light began to shine on power and politics, freedom and action. Jingoism swept all before it, yet nobody returned in pride to our republican foundations. On the contrary, "science" rushed to the rescue of the history that teaches "only how to obey." In the 1940s and '50s, the cry went up for a truly "scientific" history exactly modeled on physics or chemistry. Like physicists and chemists, historians must deal only with "repeatable events" and their "causal laws." They must be prepared to demonstrate that when "event type A" occurs, "event type B" will follow in accordance with scientific "law." That and that alone is "scientific" history; all else is dilettante trifling. At a stroke, the study of the past is saved from the menace of politics and power, freedom and action. Marx is defrocked, scientific socialism dismissed, the class struggle swept under the carpet, and yet the history that likens princes to paupers gains a new lease on life.

A curiously *arbitrary* lease it is, for scientists at that very moment harbored deep doubts about their causal laws, having admitted into the very sanctum of physics the "principle of indeterminacy," and having come to recognize that their deepest theoretical structures were man-made. "It seems strange," Hannah Arendt writes in 1956, "that so fundamental and obvious an argument should have played no role in the subsequent methodological and other discussions of historical science." Instead, "scientific" historians rush forth to "quantify their data," to deal in "number and mass" and "long-term trends," to spurn all human life except the life of "large social aggregates," and to look with renewed contempt on the unique events of narrative history: the "tricks of a very old trade"—a whore's tricks—sneers the French historian Fernand Braudel, darling of campus fatalists on two continents, for whom "events are dust" and humankind is a "prisoner" of "destiny," geography, and epidemic disease. By 1964 nonnarrative history, reports Page Smith, has become "the standard product of our academies."

In the meantime, free politics had burst into the American public realm. The professional politicians' near-monopoly on public life is shattered. The shining glory of the civil-rights movement revives the republican cause. For the first time in half a century, Americans demand a greater voice in public affairs. In 1968 a furious revolt bursts out against the power of the Democratic party establishment. The elemental struggle, in Tocqueville's words, between those who would "limit" and those who would "extend the authority of the people" becomes the daily stuff of our newspapers. It is public, blaring, and divisive, for, as always, "every one takes his side in favor of the many, or of the few." No sooner is that forgotten republican truth brought to light than a president reminds us with dramatic force of yet another forgotten republican truth: that "lust of power above the law" is an abiding political passion and remains an abiding political peril. And we, the half-buried citizens of a half-buried republic, remember what needs to be done. *Obsta principii*: "nip the shoots of arbitrary power in the bud." We do so, this one time at least.

And what is the response of our historians (not all, never all, thank heaven) to this stunning revival of republican principles, republican strug-

gles? The answer is, there is a triumphant resurgence of *social* history, history minus politics altogether (as Gertrude Himmelfarb noted in these very pages).* There is renewed emphasis, reports Lawrence Stone, on "the material basis of human existence" as the cause and explanation of all other human activity.** Marxism is refrocked in the nick of time.

We saw a profound intensification of political life and action; our historians decide to emphasize "the more inert aspects of the past," so William Bouwsma reports in the *American Historical Review*. We saw an oppressed people rise up, act together, and throw off their chains; our historians should do more studies of "people without history," says a former president of the American Historical Association, that is to say, of people who never did anything. We *saw* politics, power, and action; we *get* society, impotence, and inertia.

We saw lawless power and lawless ambition invade the American presidency; our historians' "attention has turned from authority figures and policy-makers," notes Peter H. Smith in the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*. There is virtually no interest, reports Stone, in "the great and powerful." We saw a political oligarchy challenged by champions of popular government; our historians concoct "the new political history," which studies "the influence of cultural determinants on electoral behavior"—such as being Irish and voting Democratic (and watching your party lead the country into two wars on the side of the British). We saw the half-buried American Republic still majestic, still authoritative, still shaping and instructing a citizenry; historians respond with "a readiness to discount national boundaries," reports J.H. Hexter. "Their frame of reference tends to be either larger or smaller than the nation-state," reports Stone. Western civilization matters; West Orange, New Jersey, matters, but the American Republic counts for nothing. The only "social aggregate" we are willing to die for—our country—is the only social aggregate deemed unworthy of serious attention.

Like frightened rabbits scurrying down a bolt-hole, our historians have fled from every republican truth and every republican precept that the upheavals of the Sixties ushered into the light of day. This is the motto of the age: Nip the shoots of republicanism in the bud. I say this keenly and painfully aware of all the honorable exceptions that pass here unnoticed—the work of a Bernard Bailyn, a Gordon Wood—but such is the rule, by now, of the indestructible history which teaches "only how to obey." The "dangerous tendency" of 1840 has become a full-blown political orthodoxy—a far-spreading, deep-rooted mental tyranny in the service of oligarchy, the rule of the few. "Nor is it a small power it gives one man over another," so John Locke warned us, "to have the authority to be the dictator of principles and the teacher of unquestioned truths."

Like frightened rabbits, our historians have fled from every republican precept that the upheavals of the Sixties ushered into the light of day

Then there is Nordlinger's Plea, as I shall call it. In 1981 a young scholar named Eric A. Nordlinger puts forth the suggestion that "the democratic state" be "considered seriously as an autonomy-seeking entity" by his fellow practitioners of poli sci.*** Professor Nordlinger is appropriately humble and tentative. He is keenly aware of "the pervasive grip of the society-centered perspective" within his profession; aware, too, that in poli sci, "most or nearly all public policies are understood as responses to the

*"*Denigrating the Rule of Reason,*" Harper's Magazine, *April 1984.*

** *The most telling example, perhaps, is Braudel's voluminous study,* Material Civilization and Capitalism, 1400–1800, *which omits political events entirely.*

*** *From a short work entitled* On the Autonomy of the Democratic State, *published by Harvard University Press. Nordlinger's plea was received coolly by political scientists. In a volume of essays edited by two of his Brown University colleagues, the book was described as an "insipid" discussion of mere political leadership.*

After the darkness of orthodoxy, the light of republican understanding glares harshly

politically weightiest societal expectations, demands, and pressures"—from PACs, voters, interest groups. Nordlinger is aware, too, that these fundamental principles—the walls of the dungeon of orthodoxy—are "so deeply embedded in the conventional wisdom that citizens, journalists, and scholars alike rarely consider even the possibility that the state can act contrary" to non-political forces and actors. Nevertheless, he would like to entertain the possibility that the "officials" who control the machinery of a "democratic state"—the United States, for example—might have a "preference for the maximization of their autonomy, more specifically their freedom from societal pressures and constraints." Such is Nordlinger's Plea. In these clumsy and bloodless phrases what Nordlinger wants to ask is this: Will poli sci admit into the dungeon of orthodoxy—like sticks of dynamite put into the prisoners' hands—the forgotten, evaded truth about power and political ambition (reduced here though it be to a mere "preference"), the tempting, ensnaring sweetness of power unchecked, power liberated from the people, their judgment, their votes?

What a world of fresh thought would open up for "citizens, journalists, and scholars alike"—the lost world of republican thought. New questions would arise like beacon lights and illuminate our darkened political landscape. We would see, for example, that every election year, decade after decade, some 300 or so congressional seats are scarcely contested, while we sit in the dungeon's darkness watching the TV networks "focus on the fifty key House races." We learn that this spirit of feeble contention prevails in state legislative races as well, that whole cities are given up without a struggle to one party or the other. We see that when scandal breaks out among New York Democrats, Republican party leaders run and hide until the threat of *winning* safely passes. We learn that there are numerous election districts throughout the country that have remained predominantly Republican or predominantly Democratic since the Lincoln-Douglas debates, even though every single socio-economic factor in the district may have changed beyond recognition. Heeding Nordlinger's Plea we would dare to consider, dare to suppose, that dividing up the spoils of elective office between the two parties is a supremely effective way for the great body of professional politicians to gain their common "freedom from societal pressures and constraints." "Machine politics is always bipartisan," the great Senator Robert M. LaFollette remarked during the Progressive revolt against oligarchy. We just might dare to think he was speaking the plain truth of the matter.

How much we would dare and be forced to dare as we scanned the newly illuminated political landscape. When we see Congress enact a law (as it did in 1971) that allows corporations to pour unprecedented wealth into congressional election campaigns, we would no longer vaguely wonder, sitting in the dungeon of orthodoxy, why the nation's lawmakers would *choose* to enslave themselves to PACs out of some mysterious lust for impotence. We would dare to think that maybe, just maybe, the object of the law was to put the lawmaking authority beyond the ready financial reach of independents, party insurgents, and popular tribunes—more "freedom from societal pressures and constraints."

After the darkness of orthodoxy, the light of republican understanding glares harshly, the scenes lit up are often repellent, the questions that arise may seem scarcely bearable. We see foreign alarms rung, foreign affairs emphasized, foreign wars entered upon in the midst of domestic unrest, not once, but time and time again in America: the populist revolt, then cries of "*Cuba libre,*" and in due course, war with Spain; the Progressive revolt, then the claim of "the right to travel" on munitions-carrying British ships, and in due course, war with Germany; Joe McCarthy's mob revolt against the State Department, and within months, a land war on the Asian mainland which we had just vowed never to fight; the great grass-roots revival of the Sixties, and escalating intervention in Vietnam. In the light of this grim history—and narrative history alone could shed full light on these

nterconnected deeds—we would dare to suppose, we would be almost ompelled to suppose, that Rome's senate oligarchy was not alone in sti- ling the people's unrest by "occupying them abroad."

We see how eager American officials were to "globalize American pur- oses" at the end of World War II, how eager to establish an imperial re- ublic, to "accept the responsibilities of moral and political leadership," as Jeorge Kennan famously puts it in 1947, "that history plainly intended hem to bear"—along with an "imperial" presidency, unprecedented offi- ial secrecy, permanent domestic spying, and a free people turned into a ightly clenched fist until we could bear it no longer. Quit of the dungeon of orthodoxy, we would dare to recall with the Founders that power is "like a cancer," "like the ocean," like jaws "always open to devour" public liber- y. We would remember with Madison that "perhaps it is a universal truth hat the loss of liberty at home is to be charged to provisions against dan- ger, real or pretended, from abroad." And we would dare to consider the extent to which the Cold War has been an opportunity seized upon and exploited by those who would "limit . . . the authority of the people" and greatly expand their own.

The truth of power and ambition is not always brutal and bitter. Many of the noblest spirits in history have sought great personal power and exer- cised authority above the law. Those who spend their lives attending to public affairs have tempting reason indeed for despising the inattentive many and for lusting to fight free of their judgment. It is child's play to concoct a justification for oligarchy in America. Nor is it beyond human ingenuity to make the case that the rule of the professional politicians is a bulwark against mob-anarchy that is worth all the blood and treasure and civic degradation their dominion over our public life has cost us. Yet this is beside the point. However we judge of power and ambition, we must first overthrow the orthodoxy that now conceals them, the orthodoxy that rains down curses and anathemas—"conspiratorial thinking," "political paranoia"—on every attempt to reveal them. That is the point that mat- ters. Like the Founders of the Republic, we need to look power and ambi- tion in the face without flinching. We need to confront with courage the grandeur and the terror of our human capacity to act. We must ask our- selves once again the old brave republican questions, once again "snuff the approach of tyranny in every tainted breeze," in Edmund Burke's words, and recognize the "lust of unlawful authority" when liberty stands besieged.

Only then would political history *deserve* to regain its former place in the sun. It is a poor, meager thing indeed, truly "a corpse that has to be made to lie down," as Jacques Le Goff calls it, as long as it fails—or fears—to make political power and lust of power, democracy, and the will to oligar- chy, the central facts of our republican enterprise—its "secret propensi- ties," as Tocqueville called them. Only then would narrative history regain its lost legitimacy, for it is the awesome power of human action which alone justifies telling stories of humankind's deeds, just as it lies with narra- tive alone to reveal the power of those deeds. Only then would history—one noble branch of it at least—become what Jefferson thought history would always be: a free people's civic instructor, their Homer, their Virgil, their guide, that which would "qualify them as judges of the actions and designs of men [and] enable them to know ambition under every disguise it may assume; and knowing it, to defeat its views."

Thus we would trace a great circuit and return once again to our republi- can beginnings, but one caveat seems in order. Republican virtue will not last forever unavowed and unsupported. If a republic "degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone," so, too, does a people degenerate when their rulers are perpetually concealed from them, when their public life is a perpetual mystery to them, when they never know from one year to the next why anything happens as it does. The price we pay for the dark- ness of orthodoxy may one day prove steep indeed. ■

Like the Founders of the Republic, we need to look power and ambition in the face without flinching

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PHILLIPS 66

WHEN YOU REALIZE THE FUTUR

IND YOU, YOU DON'T TAKE YOUR STEPS LIGHTLY.

LITTLE HOPE FO

Why START w

The U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency is nominally in charge of arms-control negotiations; in fact, it has a tiny budget, little political clout, and has been reduced, in recent years, to little more than a research and public-relations organization. Obsessed with the "arms-control process" in these days of renewed détente, ACDA distributes documents such as this to convey the message that only a few procedural hitches separate the superpowers from a shiny new strategic-arms treaty. But between the lines of the talking points listed here for the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) treaty, which President Reagan hopes to sign this month at the Moscow summit with General Secretary Gorbachev, lie profound disagreements that make signing this treaty in so short a time unlikely.

A key element of any arms-control treaty is figuring out how to count each other's nuclear weapons. Yet the very language of this item, with its multiple redundancies of hesitation ("subject to procedures to be developed to enable verification . . . remain to be worked out"), suggests that the negotiators have far to go before arriving at any consensus.

The United States "has not identified any effective verification approach" for sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs) because there *is* no effective approach. After a decade of studies, in and out of government, no one has devised a method to distinguish cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads from those carrying conventional explosives—short of stationing American inspectors on every Soviet ship and submarine, and vice versa, hardly an acceptable solution to either side. Since these missiles have sufficient range to strike Soviet territory from considerable distances, the Soviets are anxious to reduce their number. Conversely, the United States has no intention of limiting SLCMs under any arms-control treaty. The U.S. Navy has begun to install 3,994 SLCMs—some nuclear, some conventional—on ships and submarines, and plans to rely on SLCMs as an increasingly vital element in its offensive war-fighting strategy.

U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY, WASH

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General Approach: 50 percent reduction to equal levels in strate carried out in a phased manner over seven y treaty comes into force

Agreement not contingent upon the resoluti outside START negotiations.

Ballistic Missile Warheads: Proceed from the assumptions regarding th deployed on existing types of ballistic miss Washington Summit and subject to proced enable verification of the declared number deployed ballistic missiles of each specific accounting for warheads on future types o as changes in the number of warheads on be worked out

Mobile ICBMs: Banned

Heavy Bombers: Each heavy bomber counts as one strate vehicle (SNDV). Each heavy bomber eq and SRAMs would count as one warhea

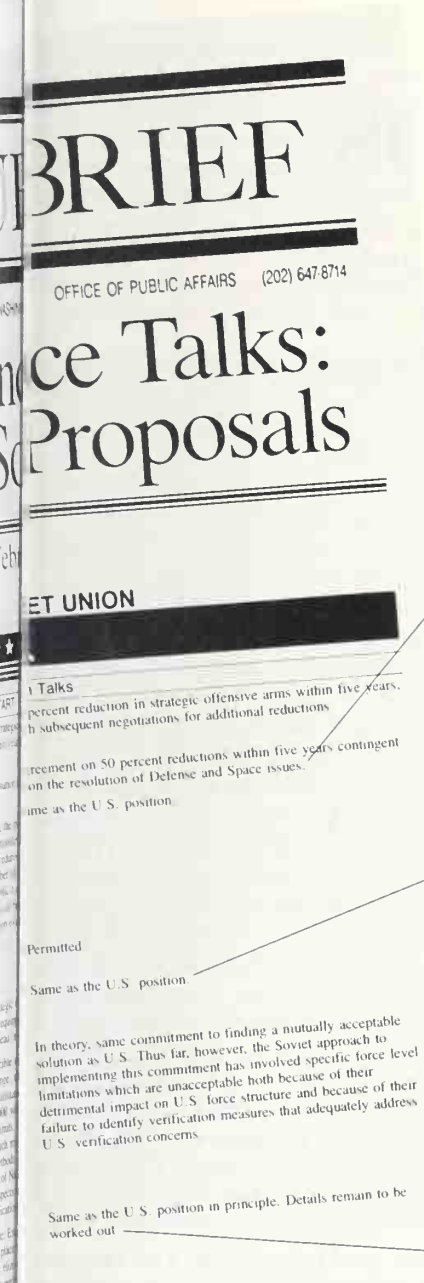
SLCMs: The sides shall find a mutually acceptab of limiting the deployment of long-rang (sea-launched cruise missiles). Such lim counting these SLCMs within the 6,00 strategic offensive delivery systems lim themselves to establish ceilings on such mutually acceptable and effective meth limitations, which could include use of cooperative measures and on-site inspe has not identified any effective verific

Verification of Compliance: Provisions, at a minimum, to include: before and after the reductions take p verify data exchange and to observe continuous on-site monitoring of the critical production and support facilit inspection of sites where treaty-limit during and after the reduction period considers that covert production, sto may be occurring. Details remain to

Fred Kaplan is the national-security reporter for the Boston Globe *and author of* The Wizards of Armageddon.

EWER MISSILES

y Fred Kaplan



BRIEF

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ce Talks:
Proposals

ET UNION

Talks

percent reduction in strategic offensive arms within five years, h subsequent negotiations for additional reductions

reement on 50 percent reductions within five years contingent on the resolution of Defense and Space issues.

ime as the U.S. position.

Permitted.

Same as the U.S. position.

In theory, same commitment to finding a mutually acceptable solution as U.S. Thus far, however, the Soviet approach to implementing this commitment has involved specific force level limitations which are unacceptable both because of their detrimental impact on U.S. force structure and because of their failure to identify verification measures that adequately address U.S. verification concerns.

Same as the U.S. position in principle. Details remain to be worked out

"Defense and Space issues," a phrase that suggests some vague technical detail, is treaty lingo for Reagan's Star Wars program. The Soviets insist that there can be no START treaty unless the United States agrees not to test components of a Star Wars system in outer space. Reagan just as adamantly resists any restraints on Star Wars and has forbidden his negotiators even to talk about the subject. Reaching agreement, therefore, will require not merely "resolution of... issues" but a cataclysmic change of policy in Moscow or Washington or both.

The START treaty, if ever signed, would not slash the nuclear arsenals as radically as advertised. Officially, each side will be limited to 6,000 strategic nuclear warheads, but in fact the treaty will allow many more. The United States plans to have 90 B–1 bombers and 132 Stealth bombers in the 1990s, each carrying an average of fifteen bombs and short-range attack missiles (SRAMs). If each bomber is counted as only one warhead, the United States could end up with 3,200 nuclear weapons that are not counted, or 9,200 in all. The Soviets will have about 200 bombers, each carrying an average of seven bombs and the Soviet equivalent of SRAMs; they could end up with 1,200 uncounted nuclear weapons, or 7,200 in all. (This would still be far less than the 13,000 and 11,000 the United States and the USSR have now, respectively.)

Indeed. Verifying the START treaty will be far more difficult than verifying the INF agreement, which Reagan and Gorbachev signed last December. INF *banned* a class of weapons; START will only *reduce* them. It's easier to tell the difference between zero and one warhead than to tell the difference between, say, 6,000 and 6,001. All of these omissions, evasions, and boilerplate distortions point to the fundamental fallacy of this issues brief: the assumption that negotiations alone play the crucial role in reaching an arms treaty. In fact, the fate of this arms treaty hinges on the political will of Reagan and Gorbachev—how badly they want a treaty and what they will sacrifice to get it.

HIDALGOS

By Bob Shacochis

"What's wrong with Americans? *Bueno,* I will tell you." He was a Dominican—not only a grower but an exporter of coffee, flying south out of Miami on to Puerto Plata. Thus he began to brief Mitchell Wilson, a businessman of sorts himself, not long after they had lifted off. Wilson listened with one ear, showed interest with one eye, smiled insincerely with half his mouth, all the while concentrating on his news magazine. "One minute," the Dominican interrupted himself, as a flight attendant walked up the aisle. "Sssstt, *be-be,* three Johnny Walker *Negro.*" He looked at Wilson. "Wha' you want, man?" making a curling smile when Wilson declined. "Hey, come on, *dígame.*" Wilson permitted the Dominican to stand him a rum.

"So now I tell you. Americans don' like to hunt when it's warm. This I don' like."

The attendant returned with four miniatures, two cups of ice; the businessman insisted he could pay only with a hundred-dollar bill. There was a discussion, and he somehow won. Wilson flipped a page, not admitting he was curious about the peccadilloes of nationality. The page he turned to was dominated by a color photograph: Iranian speedboats, machine guns mounted in their bows, the boatmen in T-shirts and camouflage pants and *mujahedin* scarves. Most of the guns were bare, some were draped in olive tarps, but one had been covered with a Persian blanket, its patterns aqua, powder blue, swirls of white, and the weapon and its mount were transformed into a beautiful shape, like a blue heron poised to land on a tidal marsh.

"What's right with Americans?—I will tell you." No participation was necessary; the Dominican would talk without it. He wiped the long, full line of his lips and mustache with a paper napkin. "*Bueno,* it is *fantasía.* It is *el sueño,* the dream, dreamland, *tierra de hadas,* make-believe from sea to sea. Every little insect a *hidalgo,* son of something. No one else has this particular advantage. Do you agree?"

A Korean student pitched a Molotov cocktail into the air. The photo was unrealistically cropped, forcing the protestor to act in isolation, deprived of support, robbed of an enemy.

The landing gear shuddered into position; the jet banked for its approach to the Salt Islands, where Wilson would disembark. The Dominican neither stopped smoking nor fastened his seat belt.

Wilson squeezed around him into the aisle. "You getting off at this crazy worthless place?" the Dominican asked, his eyebrows lowered in disbelief. "Jesus! Where you from anyway—Washington? Yii, no shit. *Vaya con Dios.* I love you green ass *maricóns.* Truly, I do." And, in-

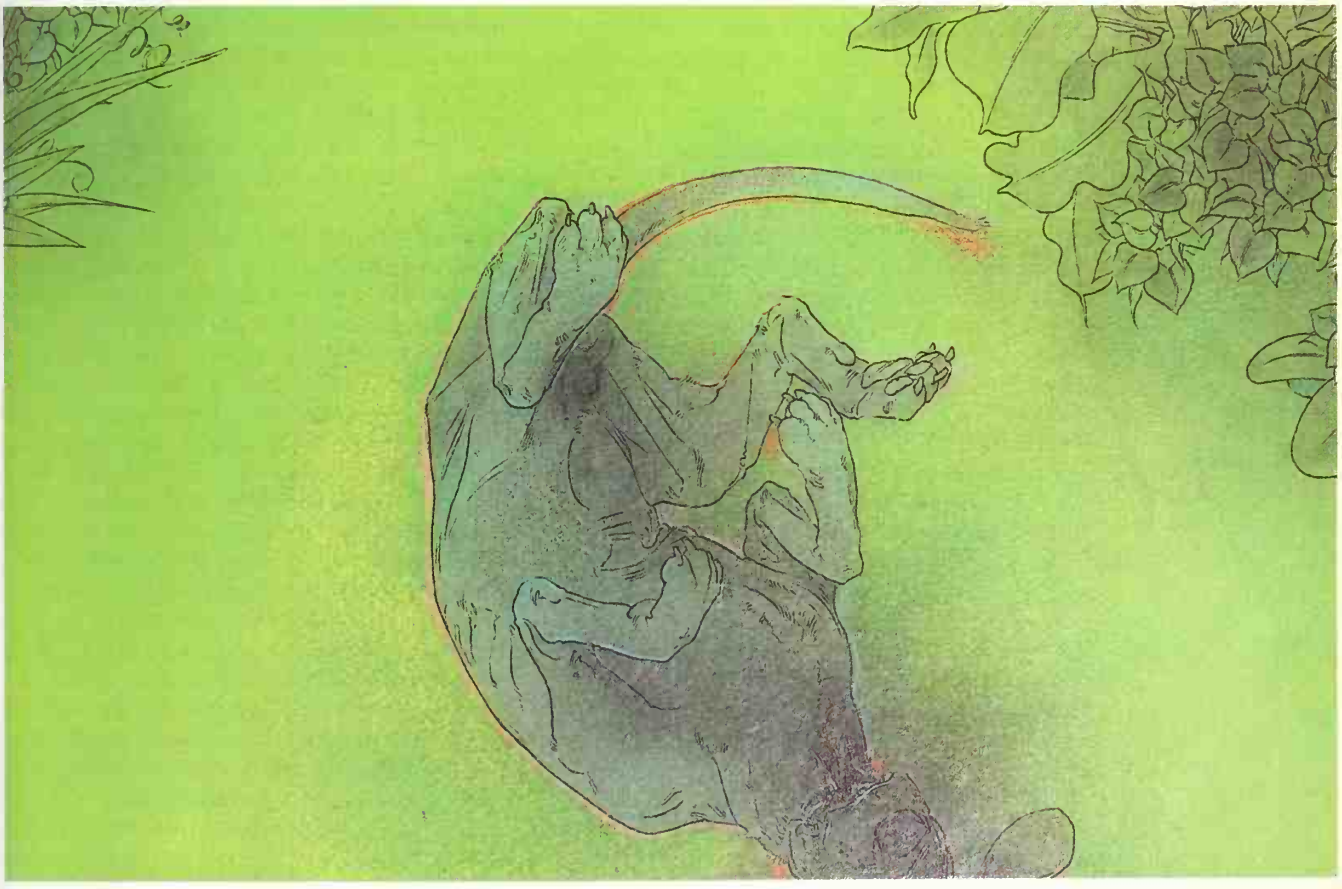
Bob Shacochis is the author of Easy in the Islands, *a collection of short stories. A new collection of his stories,* Celebrations of the New World, *will be published early next year.*

credibly, he choked with manly emotion and two tears appeared, as unexpected as guerrillas, from under the black lenses of his sunglasses. He reached for Wilson's hand to cement their brief encounter with a vigorous shake. "I love you fuckers. *Hidalgo,* true? An excellent word to an excellent country. Good-bye, bye-bye, good-bye."

Hidalgo, you'll find no uglier islands in all the tropic latitudes than the Salts. Think, if you will, of the drive between San Antonio and Laredo, that dry and ominous countryside, armored with spikes and stingers. The Salts are pieces of the same geographical mood, chipped off the continent to float in a sparkling paradisiacal sea. On the resort island of Flamingo, where Wilson had landed, there was a brief stretch of expertly paved road leading from the airport along a stagnant lagoon, defunct salt pans hosting junked cars; then seven miles of badly paved road; then an unpaved road leeward; and finally two ruts across a chalky surface puddled with milky water. No trees: Flamingo was brittle-thorn acacia, dwarf palms, pigeon-pea bushes, impenetrable thickets of cacti and bayonet plants. And amid this stunted, unfriendly growth, dead, blackened limestone-coral knolls lay scattered like Creation's own slag.

Yes, ugly, flat—and yet Flamingo had exquisite beaches, and these bone-white virgin strands were attracting *turtles* (the native term for tourists) by the tens of thousands since the new runway was completed a few years back.

Wilson's driver veered away from the sea now, off the main unpaved road to a lesser one probing lower land, where the moist air was laden not with oceanic brine but with the earthy aroma of mineral wealth. Shortly they braked in front of the lone few acres of honest fecundity on the entire length of the atoll, an outpost of organic prosperity. The hedge of oleander was head-high; behind it they had actually gotten a lawn to grow, Faye and Alberts had, a yard to be mowed, probably the first on Flamingo. The citrus trees were twice the height they were when Wilson had been here last; pole-trunked papayas embowered the tin roof of the cottage Faye and Alberts had built themselves for a pittance.



The black Lab-mix charged from the potting shed, barked once for the sake of reputation, and then flopped on his back, exposing his flea-bitten genitals for inspection. The blacks on the island were terrified of black dogs—somewhere in their collective past was a notorious one—and this mutt's name was Blackie, raised to gnarly island standard by Faye.

Tacked to the door of the screened porch was

Illustrations by David Johnson

a computer-printed notice, that Wilson read:

SALT ISLANDS
NURSERY AND LANDSCAPING LTD.

Hours: 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. Mon–Fri . . . except when
—the trucks are both broken down on the road
—we're fishing, diving, or partying

(Wilson grunted; Alberts hadn't gone fishing or diving in years.)

—Alberts is drinking his lunch in one of the local bars, which means we're only open from 8 A.M.–noon
—anyone comes by on the way to the beach, in which case we might have gone with them.

(Faye, yes; Alberts, no. He was sick of the beach.)

The nursery will then be open anytime that day when we are not at the beach.

If there's a problem, leave a message with Bozo and we will get back with you.

Bozo being a macaw, inherited from a restaurant gone out of business. He was a volatile bird at times, not to be trusted with fingers, given to brooding existential moods and swift infatuations. He had been enamored of Faye, followed her everywhere, repeating, as she had taught him, one rudeness after another.

"Alberts," Wilson hallooed, unsticking the warped frame of the screen door. He set his luggage down and stood lulled by the homestead serenity that was the atmosphere of every tent, shanty, sailboat, or house inhabited by the two vagabonds, Faye and Alberts, the secure do-it-yourself clutter, the professionally makeshift life, as comfortable as a rag rug.

"Alberts?"

So recognizable, this island peace back in the bush. There on the worktable was Faye's typewriter, a white hand towel spread over it to keep out dust. He lifted the covering—well, it didn't have to be, but the carriage was empty. No letters-in-progress, reports to Burton's clinic in Freeport, to some authority or other about sea turtles or porpoises, blue-shelled lobster or the iguanas unique to the Salts. That was over and now, finally—why had it taken so long? Wilson was feeling it with guilty relief.

Alberts's voice. "Back here," he called.

Wilson crossed the shallow depth of the cottage, stepped through a sliding door to the deck and the open-air kitchen. Alberts was at the gas stove, heating refried beans in an iron skillet. They would be tasty, Wilson knew, knowing Alberts. And knowing Alberts, the glass he saluted with contained rum and water, half and half.

Wilson relaxed. At least Alberts was eating as well as drinking, not yet so much a part of the everyday shifts of alignment that he had gone to pieces, as burdened white men were supposed to in the tropics, crawling on their hands and knees, letting pathos ride their backs like a monkey. Faye had died—Alberts had taken her to Miami two months ago to do it. First, though, he had spent a year with her on the road: the clinic in the Bahamas, then to Mexico and Arizona for experimental treatments, a faith healer in West Palm, another clinic in Greece, what must have been a sorrow-stricken, one-day return to Flamingo, back on the plane the following morning to Miami, a damn hotel room off the interstate near the hospital. She had called Wilson from there, only to hang up before she finished a sentence. Alberts had taken her ashes out to the reef about a week ago. What was left was to clear out, and he had asked Wilson to help if he could.

"Until this minute . . ." Wilson began, his throat hardening. "Oh boy. I really miss her."

"Listen. Knock it off. She's here, she's all around us. You're a fool if you don't know that, so stop worrying about it." He took the skillet off the heat and smiled. "I'll tell you what her last words were—'Tell Wilson to go fuck himself.' " He laughed. "You want a drink or not?"

Alberts wore mechanic's jeans sagging below negligible hips, belted under the puff of his stomach. The sleeves of his work shirt were rolled up past his elbows, the front left unbuttoned, the tails tied loosely at his waist. He had on a cap too, a relic of the Tesoro Corporation, a salvage outfit he nearly got off the ground; and though his neck and forearms were athletically tanned, everywhere else his skin was pallid, much too protected, slack beginning to threaten in the flesh. His carefully groomed beard and much of his hair had whitened. He was worn out, had stepped in his mind through the bottoms of his shoes, and he intended to repatriate himself to the States, where he had not lived for twenty-three years. Wilson figured Alberts should stay put, but he wasn't going to say anything without being invited to, and knowing Alberts, there wasn't going to be an invitation.

Up until the past year, when she had no choice but to look like a dying middle-aged woman, Faye had unconsciously managed to seem a prototypical hipster, someone in a photograph taken, say, in 1958, at a café poetry reading. Alberts had met her in the Village, an errant daughter of a first family of Virginia, working on her Ph.D. in psychology at NYU. She had known all the writers, all the geek intellectuals. He tended bar on MacDougal Street, kept company with the folk musicians, all the queer actors and actresses, but he had been to war in Korea and to something like it in Cuba, married to and divorced from a model who had been given pearls by Sinatra—as if he, Alberts, a kid from Kansas City, had let his life be defined by

Hollywood and the Pentagon. But only for a while; by the time he met Faye he had focused elsewhere. The two talked the type of fast and faraway talk everybody indulges in en route to bed; but when they drove together to New Orleans, neither of them turned out to be bluffing. Alberts, justifiably, had the daylights scared out of him. Faye, goddamn her, was fearless. Some life they were cutting themselves loose into.

Wilson first ran into them in '72 when he was working in international development in Costa Rica. They were out on the coast, Puerto Limón, preposterous yanquis, shark fishing, trotlines bated with offal strung across the river mouth. Next, there was a copra plantation up North, then a bogus gold mine in Colombia, a charter business, a restaurant one place, then still another one, a three-table enterprise. When her breasts were removed, she was given six agonizing months to live. But Faye was a headstrong, difficult woman. Anybody who had ever been in a room with her for five minutes could have guessed her reaction. *Wrong,* was all she had to say. Her revenge against the arrogance of science lasted eight willful years. They arrived in the Salts with nothing—little money and Faye's cancer, two suitcases and a box of tools coated with axle grease. But the Salts were wide open at the time. The evolution of opportunities was discreet and bizarre: they fried chicken, packed box lunches for smugglers; babysat shopping bags of cash for a thousand dollars an hour; inherited hundreds of five-gallon pots of South Florida dirt, each with a withered sprig at its center—an unlikely bounty from one of the high priests of the substance trade, his scheme to ornament his hideaway estate with flowering extravagance preempted by a hitch in one shipment that led to time in jail. The first and only nursery on Flamingo; that was it, *hidalgos,* Alberts and Faye had finally declared themselves at home.

Wilson accepted the highball glass of rum, adding juice and ice from the refrigerator. Alberts lumped beans into two mugs and handed one to Wilson, then asked what his schedule was.

"Get pissed to the gills with you," Wilson said.

"Ah, yes."

"But first, as soon as we can, sit down with the people at the Ministry, get over to Cockburn Cay, meet their man. Does he know how to manage an operation like this? Can he tell a customer from a pH content? Talk to your lawyer, talk to the government's lawyers."

From behind a rough lattice screen separating the kitchen from the grounds, its diamonds woven solid with passion-fruit vine, materialized one of the Haitian laborers. His face was a shadow beneath the brim of a straw hat that would have looked right on Huck Finn. He held a machete and a fat green pumpkin.

"Keep it for yourself, Raicees." He went over and laid his hand on the small man's shoulder. "Cook it for yourself and Luciano. Or sell it to one of the ladies in the Bight." The worker held out the pumpkin, as though he expected his employer to take it. He raised his chin, light falling across his round boy's face, deferential and puzzled. "Anything else out there—cucumbers or squash—you and Luciano take it home with you." Faye had scattered vegetable seeds throughout the compound, let them grow wild.

"He doesn't understand you. Does he?"

Alberts shook his head, abstracted, thinking of something else. "Well . . . yeah, mostly. Faye would only speak to them in Spanish, which is better." He took his hand away from Raicees, and he was gone. "They don't believe me."

The beans were too dry, like spackling; Alberts was losing his touch. Wilson reached for the bottle of red salsa on the shelf. "You're always leaving," he said to Alberts, gently bringing the conversation back around to business, "and you're always coming back."

"Not this time."

They went inside the cottage and sat down, one at each end of the convertible couch. Alberts and Faye had slept right there for four years, molested by no-see-ums, no privacy, as if they were still on one of the boats, often waking with hangovers to customers on the porch rapping on the glass door—until, after the Club Med cut-flowers contract, Alberts had added on the bedroom.

Alberts slouched, balancing his drink on his belly. "Look," he began, "the Cockburn Cay people aren't worth seeing. They've rooted some cuttings; Faye gave them a sack of neem seeds but they couldn't get them sprouted. They have papaya seedlings in Dixie cups. Their shade shed was knocked down in the last hurricane and it's still down." Alberts smiled ruefully. "I'm sorry I asked you to get mixed up in it."

Wilson, now that he understood Alberts was retreating from the deal, was apologetic himself. "I wanted to come down earlier, before Faye died. At least for the wake . . . This was the best I could do."

There was another buyer, Alberts said. "A white kid, French, here with his wife and baby. Nice guy, same figure, he's ready to do it. Why not? The government would let this place go to hell, right?"

Righter than right. The point all along had been expediency; swift, irreversible release. It was no skin off Wilson's nose; better, really—an individual with a family would prove a more

reliable debtor than any government in power in the Salts. The closing was set for Thursday morning, Alberts said, so nothing important had changed.

"You can stay here if you like. We fixed up one of the tool sheds into a bungalow. It isn't fancy. It isn't even clean."

Wilson wanted to stay; he said he wouldn't leave until he saw the papers signed—just in case. Bozo came to the door, rocking from foot to foot, eavesdropping; and Alberts flattered the bird, saying how pretty he was, poured him a cup of orange juice, two more rums to celebrate the smooth resolution of Wilson's arrival, the alteration of plans. They might as well go ahead and get soused, Alberts proposed, and not worry about a damn thing. The bird gargled with his juice; the voices of the Haitians could be heard out on the lot, their creole like the singsong of effeminate boys. Boat people, working without papers—Wilson had been thrown the first time he heard the way they responded to their employers; the endearments, the childlike intimacy, a code of filial love claimed by the dispossessed. *Yes, mommy. Merci, mommy. Drink of water, mommy.*

I can't believe them, either, Faye had said, giggling. Cubans raise hell, Haitians kiss the foot that holds them down in their own filth. She gave them anything they wanted except mechanical things, because she had once given Raicees a padlock for a shed and he had broken it. Tell me, she had asked Wilson, how do you bung up a lock and key in five minutes? *Poppi?*—this was Luciano, years ago, pointing at Alberts's wristwatch—*how much?* Not how much time left to work, because what did that matter, but how many holes would a man have to dig to purchase such an object? It was only a ten-dollar Timex; Alberts gave both men new ones for Easter, the next available holiday. They made enough to buy their own, no problem, but always sent the money home to Cap Haitien.

Back on the couch with a fresh drink, Alberts's eyes wandered the room. There was a plaid recliner chair o unguessable origin, it foam stuffing in piece on the floor, ejected b nesting mice. Nails i the plywood hung wit foul-weather oilskins diving gear, Faye's sex tant and binoculars, rust fishing lures, a bwan pith helmet Faye some times wore for fun. A gun rack for a shotgun a BB rifle for feral cats A shortwave radio, citizens band that woul have been crackling had the nursery been open for business, a cas sette player with speaker wired into the shad shed. (The arum fam ily—caladium, dieffen bachia, ceriman, Hunter's Robe—was being introduced to Nina Si mone and Eric Von Schmidt the last time Wilson was in the Salts.) Shells and seed pods, shards of Amerindian pottery, nautical charts, photos of boats and one of Alberts's son by his first wife, now at college in Madison. All the remaining space, the shelves and the floor, was warehoused with books—gorged with manuals, novels, paperbacks, classic and trashy; spilling stacks of garden magazines, coffee-ringed alternative-health bulletins, entomology journals, seed and equipment catalogues.

"I have to pack," Alberts said, but they both stayed as they were.

In the early evening, Wilson mentioned he was starved, repeated it twice before Alberts agreed they should drive to the harbor for something to eat. The curse of a captain's license—there never was a time when Alberts hadn't taken the most pleasure in travel as a passenger, so Wilson drove, assuming Faye's place.

On his previous visit, the final night (or was it the first?), the three of them closed a waterfront bar. Leaving, Faye stumbled and her eyeglasses fell off; Wilson found them, she put them back on, myopic as a fish, not realizing the lenses had popped out. A quarter-mile down the road she stopped. I can't see a blasted thing, she said, unable to recall ever drinking herself into a state of blindness. You better drive, she told Wilson, and they changed places. A mile further down the road, a bug flew into Faye's eye;

he doubled over, head on her knees, strangled y laughter that infected the two men until they oo were whooping and choking, and Wilson arked in the middle of the dark island road, unble to hold the wheel.

They had few choices for dinner—it was no onger the tourist season. The yacht club, a club nore by name than by practice, seemed to be he best place open. They sat at the bar and tudied a chalkboard menu. "Get whatever you vant," Alberts insisted. "Get a lobster. I'm days way from twenty-five grand."

"Crown Prince of Flamingo." Wilson cleared iis head. "Ten percent down? I thought you vere asking more."

"I was, I did," Alberts nodded. "I got t . . . the other share goes into Cholly's pocket."

"*What?*" In a fool's pocket is where it was going. Wilson had strolled through the grounds after putting sheets on the mattress in the bungalow. Cholly had let the nursery run down. He had lounged in his underwear on the office couch for twelve months—a model castaway, reading mysteries and warrior adventures and drinking quinine while Alberts followed Faye from treatment to treatment.

"Don't talk to me about it," Alberts said. 'Order anything you want if you're my friend."

Alberts bought a drink for anyone who walked in, as long as there was no talk of him as if he were a victim of Faye's demise. He had no patience for rituals of mourning. Wilson devoured his fish-and-chips when they came from the kitchen. The sterile atmosphere of the club receded in alcoholic laughter, and by the time he finished eating, the bar was packed two-deep, the tables occupied in the restaurant section. "Would you sleep with an old soft-brained mullet like me?" he heard Alberts, making the rounds now, tease a young woman out of habit and style, a vestige of appreciation; that afternoon Alberts had hinted at impotency and his general indifference to a cure. Cholly arrived, Flamingo's premier ne'er-do-well, to a fanfare of vulgarity from his competition. Wilson had never known him to wear anything but a uniform of aggressive unemployment: an epauletted bush shirt, baggy khaki shorts, plastic sandals, and his beard grown high on his cheeks. There was nothing a white man couldn't do in the Salts that Cholly hadn't done—except get rich or move on.

"Caveat emptor," he grumbled to the woman behind the bar, demanding his regular tonic. "Let the buyer bloody well beware with a girl like you." The exchange of haughty looks was no more than a game. Cholly then turned to scrutinize Wilson with an arrogant smile. "What brings you snooping around?" he challenged, in command of a thousand affectations, measuring Wilson through half-lidded eyes. Suddenly his manner changed, and he pumped Wilson's hand, blustering with good-natured fellowship. "Good to see you, sir. We missed having you aboard when we dunked Faye." It was as if Cholly were Nöel Coward's younger brother, banished to the tropics, there to corrupt the art of theatrics and dramatize the craft of personal corruption.

"How's Alberts been holding up?" Wilson asked.

Cholly blinked, pursed his fleshy lips, acting out the act of evaluation. Finally he spoke. "How the bloody hell does he seem to you?"

"He seems all right. Thrown off a cliff, but the same."

"Ah," said Cholly, "very well then. That's all there is to it then, isn't it? Let the man be, I say. He's drinking himself into the crematory fires. It's a proper tradition here. However," Cholly held up a blunt finger, "I'm afraid it will not travel well. What will the poor bastard do in the Great White North? Bag groceries? Carpool with your Mister Hasenfus?"

Alberts emerged from the muddle and wrapped an arm around Wilson, patting his shoulder. He looked disoriented and swollen, and leaned with most of his weight. "Look who's here—" Next to Alberts stood a lank man, square-jawed, a head of bleachy hair, a beard thin and colorless, with pockmarked skin and predatory eyes. He was a Scandinavian, a Norwegian, Wilson remembered, but couldn't think of his name. A builder or an architect: Flamingo was thick with both. "—Nils." Nils had housed Faye and Alberts for a couple months when they first came to the island.

"What did they do with all the black people around here?" someone—an off-season turtle or escapee from Club Med—questioned the bartender.

"Dey is teefin' you room dis very minute," she answered, and punished him with a scowl.

Alberts suddenly turned gloomy and wanted to leave. "Let's all go on out to the nursery," he said. "I want Wilson to hear the song we played when we took Faye out to the reef."

Whiffs of Thelonious Monk crackled down the rows of botanic platoons, made the glossy leaves of the sea grapes shimmer marvelously. Down a path flanked with crotons, Cholly and Wilson bumped and wobbled, a light-headed midnight dance. Inside the house, Nils and two girls—well, youngish women—sprawled on the couch, smoking cigarettes, cans of beer in their hands. Cholly, as formal as a circuit magistrate, entered and fit himself into the recliner, ready to pontificate. Wilson looked at Faye's desk and

decided he shouldn't sit there. While he was out on the porch to get a chair, the screen door nudged and rattled, and he opened it for Bozo to come in for the soiree.

"Oh God, look," one of the girls exclaimed. The stylized edges of her hair looked as if they'd been blown back from her scarlet face by an explosion. Where had these women come from? Wilson thought. Did they live on Flamingo? Guests of their fathers, brutal wizards of real estate? Sorority field trip? "It's a parrot! Isn't he gorgeous?" Bozo scaled the couch, zeroing in on her, using his enormous black beak to haul himself up. The other girl sprang to her feet and stood by the rear door, no friend to feathered things, watching the bird waddle along the spine of the couch and stop, inspecting her companion.

"Polly want a cracker?" the girl on the couch asked, reaching out her hand slowly. The bird cocked its head, appraised the rings on her fingers; the feathers bristled at the back of its neck, a request to be scratched.

"Polly want a cracker?" she persisted. Bozo straightened up, realizing she wasn't really going to touch him.

"Polly want a cracker?"

Bozo eyed her keenly. "Fuck off," he shrieked, and Cholly rumbled with demonic chuckling. Faye had taught the bird to be indignant when people annoyed him with the cracker routine.

"He despises crackers," Cholly explained. "Why don't you ask him if he likes oral sex?"

From the bedroom at the back of the cottage came Alberts, loaded down with clothes still on their hangers. "I want you all to have these," he announced; you could see his mind turning, trying to match the pair of men's slacks at the top of his pile to a body. Nils and Cholly ignored him, but Wilson and the two girls raised their eyebrows at one another. The lack of response seemed to bother him not at all. Then his eyes flashed with enthusiasm and he dumped the clothes in the middle of the room. Wilson stared uncomfortably at the pile. "I've got something for you ladies too," Alberts said, winking, and turned on his heels. One of the girls lit a joint.

Wilson thought he would strike up a conversation with Nils. "What is this music?" he asked. "Is this . . . Monk?"

He was astonished when the Norwegian snarled. "You don't know anything about jazz. First, you're an American. Second, you're not old enough."

"You're kidding me." Cholly passed him the joint as Alberts clumped back into the room, waving something long and pink.

"Gaw!" The girl on the couch looked at her friend, and they both tittered. "Are those d-dos? Look how big they are!"

"Take them if you want them," Alberts re-ommended happily. There were four of the that he sailed across the room one at a tim flipping them like throwing knives. "Someon traded them for a plant. They've never bee used. Faye didn't go in for that stuff." Alber wandered over to the cassette player. The mus stopped and began again, something differen poorly recorded and scratchy, an almost famili maudlin voice singing about a dolphin. Out the corner of his eye, Wilson watched the gi with the peeled-back hair handle a dildo, plac it to her lips and crack up, raise it back and pa her mouth. Good Lord, he thought, don't that. Nils tapped him hard on the knee.

"Listen to this, Wilson," Alberts encourag from the corner.

Nils spat his accusation a second time "You're too young to know shit about jazz." H was, inexplicably, angry, and Wilson was get ting there.

"Listen to this, would you?"

He had no idea why the Scandinavia thought Americans were disenfranchised fror their own music, but at least he could argue tha Nils was no more than a few years older tha him. He felt his attention splinter. "What th hell are you talking about?"

The tape ejected, leaving behind a static buz that paralyzed the room. Wilson ducked just in time to avoid being hit by the cassette Albert whipped at his head. An opposing wave of fur surged through him; he wasn't a kid anymore he didn't have to sit there and bite his tongue and take an offense from Alberts he didn't de serve. Still, he gaped at Alberts, utterly stupe fied, and couldn't move.

"You rotten sonofabitch," Alberts slurred, his head wagging, flushed and bitter. "I wanted you to hear that song. I put it on for you. Faye loved that song."

"Why did you throw it?" Wilson protested "Why would you do a thing like that?"

Cholly, firm and steady with genuine author ity, rose from the recliner. "Okay, old salt," he said with surprising tenderness. He carefully slipped his arm around Alberts and led him docile, defeated by the impulse of his generos ity, back through the cottage. "Let's put you to bed."

"I'm freaked," the girl who had been appre hensive about the bird complained. "I mis Faye." Wilson told her to shut up about Faye.

Sometime soon after dawn, with the nursery flooded with damp heavy light, Wilson awoke on his pallet in the primitive bungalow and

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rolled on his side to gaze out the floor-to-ceiling screening. Mosquitoes whined throughout the room, and there were remarkable conversations, like convergent streams of consciousness, taking place out in the compound. He listened intently but couldn't determine the sense of what people were saying. Jesus—Wilson sat up—no wonder Alberts is going crazy. He slipped on a pair of running shorts and went outside. A woman talked on a telephone, which was not possible: no service.

"Hello . . . Sal?"

". . ."

"The things people do these days."

". . ."

"I'll be sure to tell him. Ha ha ha ha ha."

Wilson peeked around a corner barrier, a wall of incestuous vegetation, saw no customers, only a potting table—and then the two parrots housed in separate cages, a Green and an African Gray. The Green became a little girl, chanted a nursery rhyme, switched to a soundtrack for exorcism. When Wilson approached, the bird fell silent; the African Gray cowered at the bottom of its cage, its breast visibly pounding, riven with fear. The Green started again, playing the role of an old hooker, and Wilson watched amazed as it calmly mimicked a woman's orgasm, *don't stop, don't stop baby, don't stop.*

Alberts was up and dressed, making coffee. He moved around with a wooden gait, as if his hips were damaged, and his face looked doughy, his eyes bloodshot. Nothing was wrong with his mood, though—he gave a hearty greeting, reconciliation a form of auto-response for both men, all the mornings down through the years, forgiving each other the trespasses and crossed signals of the previous evening. Wilson went straight to the refrigerator for juice, but grabbed a papaya instead, and cut himself a slice.

"Whose disgraceful birds are those out back?"

"Cholly's," Alberts replied. "Cholly," he called over his back, "you've got to get the birds and everything else that's yours out of here today." The Frenchman Bruno, the new owner, wanted to scrub down the house inside and out and have its bare walls whitewashed. The Frenchman couldn't stand Cholly anyway, and had asked Alberts to make sure to put him out.

Cholly, his nose in a book, waved acknowledgment from the couch. "The Gray is mentally disturbed. Victim of a broken home." Cholly then sniffed, hobbled outside to the deck to make himself a cup of tea.

Descending into lethargy, Wilson went back to the bungalow and spent a half hour under the cold shower, waking up finally to a more tenacious spirit. He reappeared at the cottage in a bathing suit, a towel slung around his neck. Alberts, in the recliner, pawed through a cartor loose photographs, a rum and water next to h on the floor. Wilson could see he wasn't feel well either.

"Something to eat?"

"Naw," Wilson said, "I'm going to w down to the beach."

Who would have believed it, but Alberts t Wilson to wait, he would go with him. handed Wilson a set of snapshots while he w to change. They were pictures of Faye's buri all the local expat crowd and a few somber land faces, going to sea on one of the dive bo bedecked with flowers. Alberts, grim immob ity, on the stern, while a heavyset man with walrus mustache and a military beret shook her remains from a shiny can, a plume of wh entering the frothy wake of the engines. T other passengers each held a hibiscus blossom throw or a bottle of beer or both. Wilson sh fled through the pictures. Alberts on the b alone, white hair wisping from under a Navy b cap, wearing an ironed white shirt and camo flage pants, a posy of vermilion impatie clutched in both hands. Next picture, Faye better times. Bozo atop her pith helmet, Black at her feet on a leash, his punishment for cha ing cars. Her smile of tenability, as always, sai Your information is reliable—of course, we su vive. The young nursery proliferated in t background. Wilson shuffled again and Fa rose dying, propped with pillows in a motel be her blonde hair stuck with poisonous sweat her gaunt face, hands together but you can b not in prayer, and her expression, the war confidence of belief, was the same, infuriating the same. Alberts lay beside her, clearly e pressing his rage at whoever was pointing t camera.

He returned to the front room in a fad bathing suit and long-sleeved shirt, his legs pale as an Edwardian banker's. "Can I have th photograph, Alberts?" Wilson asked witho thinking, holding it up to show which one h meant.

Disgusted, Alberts tried to stifle an expre sion identical to that in the picture. "Why you want a picture of her when she was sic What's wrong with you?"

Alberts's remonstration embarrassed Wilso and he couldn't think of what to say. "I don know," he mumbled. He tried to palliate his r quest, to make it seem less morbid. "She was t bravest person I ever knew."

Alberts relented. "Keep it if you want then he said, "but take one of the other pictures to I don't want you to have just that one."

At the beach, they sat and splashed in t shallow water, groaning with relief. They sipp from cans of warm beer and Alberts, trying

:ep his cigarette from getting wet, seemed to onstantly pantomime a man asking for quiet. love this," he said. "This is the life, and I've d it." Wilson pointed out to him that Faye, ho had strived for six years to bring him back the glorious water or get him on one of the ys for a picnic, would kick his backside if she ere there.

"I was tired of it all," explained Alberts. Hey, I'd had enough." And wasn't it Faye who id the opposite of a good life is not necessarily bad life? The opposite of a profound truth may ery well be another profound truth. "This is ie greatest thing on the planet, this water," lberts crowed with pleasure, and under he ent, glasses, cigarette, beer and all. By the me they toweled themselves dry and left, Al-erts's face resembled a pomegranate, his shoul-ers and back were blistering, his legs looked ke they had been scraped with a wire brush.

The Frenchman was waiting at the cottage in ie last light of the afternoon, overwhelming iem with his energy, his competence. "Al-erts," he lectured, both amused and impatient, vhat are you doing? You never go to the beach id now you go to the beach? You're supposed o be moving out, eh?" He gestured at a five-allon drum of paint he had lugged in. "Look, I ole that from the airport—they're too disor-anized to know what's going on," he confessed ith laughter. "I think it should be enough, es?"

The Frenchman paced around the room, sur-eying for other reasons to be there. "Alberts, here are the Haitians? I want them to start rowing out all the junk in the main shed. Okay with you? Are they around? How did you et so much junk out there? It all has to go." He valked out back, shouting for Raicees.

"Jesus Christ," said Wilson. "A real apitalist."

"He's all right. It'll be good for the place. Ie'll unwind."

"He's going to burn up trying to make this nto a white man's business."

"*Compadre,*" Alberts said. He was his most entle self. "*Tome una Cuba Libre conmigo, si?*"

"*Bueno,*" Wilson agreed, and in a minute he vas back with the drinks.

"She betrayed me, my friend," Alberts said, is voice no louder than the fluid sound of water utside, pressure-driven from the hand-dug vells, beginning to soak the nursery. "You now how it was with us. Then she kept getting sicker and sicker . . . and she wanted to live."

By the following morning a front had settled pon the Salt Islands, weather the locals called leaky. Wilson and Alberts shared a pot of coffee and listened to the BBC. Bozo wanted attention; Alberts picked him up and put him on his shoulder, but the sunburn was too sensitive, so he let the bird hop around, stealing toast, sticking his black tongue in the pot of jam. Blackie was asleep on the deck, twitching, curled around his empty food dish.

"I don't know what I'm going to do about these animals," Alberts fretted, staring red-eyed at the dog. "I should shoot them, I suppose."

"What shit," Wilson protested. Macho melodrama. "They'll be fine."

Alberts conceded, too exhausted to be offended. "You're right," he groused. The Frenchman Bruno parked out front in a swirl of dust and honked several times before he bounded merrily into the cottage, his personality unaffected by the drop in barometrics, there to make certain they were out of bed, preparing for town.

"Where's Cholly?" Bruno questioned Wilson. Cholly hadn't come home the night before—nothing extraordinary. Bruno turned to Alberts. "Where is he?"

"Don't worry," Alberts said. "Cholly will show up. He'll be there." And Bruno, seemingly satisfied, left as quickly as he'd arrived, speeding off into a horizon of lowering gray clouds.

When Alberts had brushed his teeth a second time and combed the stiffness in his paper-white hair, they left too. The road was thick with traffic racing toward them, buses and vans carrying the day shift of workers to Club Med or farther down leeward where a marina was under construction. Four times Alberts instructed Wilson to pull over to pick up a walker, pedestrians too poor for transport, old black women toting bundles on their skulls. "Mistah Alberts," the last one said, much like the others, "tank you, sah. We ahll shall meet again in heaven, sah. Drop me here, please."

Wilson let Alberts off at the two-story yellow stucco where the lawyers' offices were, watching him walk like an old man up the steps that led to the upper arcade. He then parked in the office lot and smoked a cigarette, which he almost never did anymore. When he finished, he climbed the steps, went down along a balcony, opened a door upon a woman typing who told him the number of the conference room. He knocked once and sauntered in. At the head of an oblong table, the Commonwealth lawyer, a Canadian, thumbed through a portfolio of documents. Never had Wilson heard a bad word said against this robust, optimistic man. The two of them had been bonefishing once, in fact, and the solicitor, unmindful of the interruption, rose to offer his hand.

"How's it been going?" Wilson asked. "Anybody cut anybody's throat yet?"

"Speeding along," the lawyer said, and grinned and sat back down. "Keeping these magnates happy." He opened a hardbound ledger of Royal Bank checks.

"You made it, I see," Wilson said, nodding at Cholly.

Cholly said nothing. He reeked of eau de cologne, sat composed and erect in his chair, smug with the dubious talent of his resiliency. And Bruno, casting thin smiles around the room, double-checked inventory sheets and scanned the contract, his knees clapping methodically, his fingers drumming the arm of his chair.

Alberts—whatever remained of Alberts appeared to have turned radically inward. He hunched forward, his elbows on the table and eyes downcast, sun poisoned, despondent.

The lawyer tore the check he had written from its book. "Seventeen thousand five hundred and so on." Cholly pressed it to his mouth, folded it into the bottom pocket of his bush shirt. "Cholly, we know each other well," the lawyer stated diplomatically. "When you leave here, go right to the bank, would you please, and deposit it." Impossible to insult Cholly. He was presented the appropriate document for his signature; then the lawyer left the room to make a copy of it on his machine.

Wilson found it unbearable to look across the table at Alberts's wordless inertia, his wounded sobriety, unbearable because his sympathy was limited—Alberts should be stronger, take a lesson from Faye; after all, he was getting what he wanted. Wilson got up for a cup of coffee from the electric pot and stood at the window.

It was raining but not hard. Behind the offices the foundation of another building was under construction. It was going to be big, ambitious, maybe the biggest structure in the Salts, by the looks of it. The first circle of workmen—Haitian laborers; no one else would do what they would—went about their business, exposed to the solemn drizzle, the paste of the disturbed ground. They were stripped to the waist, lean torsos glistening, their heads wrapped in bright bandanas—colors vibrating without sunlight, color full of sap, color that would burst with juice if the surface was penetrated. The men had dug footings that from above composed a checkerboard pattern, each black up to his hips in his respective hole, their dark muscles smeared with gluey sand, ragged pants caked with muck.

As Wilson observed their movements, the rain suddenly became a downpour, and one by one the field cleared as the men sought shelter. He wished he had a camera to record the strangely vital image of the men as the squall passed and they resumed their positions on the checkerboard, and the game started again. He would expect such a picture to explain what e couldn't, to be its own news about the tide balance among men.

"Let's wrap this up," the lawyer said as came back to the table, handing out identi sets of documents for each of the three to si He waited for Alberts's attention to form bef the accounting continued. Over five years of re resentation, the nursery had not paid a cent the lawyer. Three thousand—a fair and dec sum—was subtracted from the top figure.

"Now, accounts due. Let's clear them out

Seven thousand four hundred thirty-two cetera.

"I don't like this any more than you do," t lawyer sympathized. "Taxes."

Twenty-five hundred.

"Closing fees."

One thousand.

"Utilities."

Nine hundred something.

"The mortgage remaining on the property.

Three thousand more.

In the name of Austin Alberts, the lawy filled out a check for seven thousand two hu dred forty dollars and eleven cents U.S. The would be more, of course, monthly payments the lien for twenty years to come. Alber tucked the check into his pocket without loo ing at it.

Together they all strolled to the yacht cl for Bloody Marys, but the intended celebrati was flat and halfhearted, so they disbanded b fore their glasses were emptied. Wilson dro Alberts home, put him into his bed and kiss him on the cheek. He had done what he coul it was time to go.

After he collected his gear, he took himself one of the nursery trucks to the airport, leavi the key in the ignition, and entered the comp tition for a seat on the plane that would ta him to Puerto Plata, then to Miami, finally ba to Washington. *Hidalgos* today? Such were h thoughts as he sat in the terminal among th many. Nobodies and the sons and daughters nobodies. *Hijos de nadie.* The saints of the Ne World lived on in history, but their descen dants, bastards of the bastards of the bastard left in the night for America. Perhaps whe they were somebodies, or the children of som bodies, they came home.

Faye and Alberts—their vagabond marriag the stubborn precious questing of their fai ures—how had they measured their live against what standard? Mitchell Wilson on thought he knew, but now he knew he didn' What remained was for Alberts to enter, li the millions before him in these times, the dra of cooling current, and without further hesit tion or loyalty remit himself to the North.

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INFORMED BY INDIFFERENCE

A walk in Antarctica

By Barry Lopez

The longest flight I ever made—the metaphysical distance between points, not the hours aloft—was from Christchurch, New Zealand, to McMurdo Station, Antarctica. It was aboard a four-engine, propeller-driven cargo plane called a C–130, flown by the Royal New Zealand Air Force. It took eight hours to broach the Pacific with two dozen passengers and a full load of freight.

Once airborne, most of us found a niche among the cargo pallets. With earplugs firmly in place to moderate the engine noise, and cushioned by our heavy clothing and parkas, we all dozed and read. Some stared into space. It was too noisy to talk. Every hour or so I moved to a small porthole window and gazed at the vast ocean. In those moments above the cloudless sea, my body vibrating with the plane, I began to feel how remote Antarctica was.

We landed on the sea ice at McMurdo, and then the group of us—scientists, technicians, several official visitors—were driven across the ice to Ross Island, to our respective billets at the American station at McMurdo and at nearby Scott Base, the New Zealand station. I checked in with my host, the National Science Foundation, which runs the American scientific program on the continent; introduced myself to several scientists; and joined a small group for dinner.

It was hard to get the laconic, heavy-shouldered rhythm of McMurdo, the contradict air of scientific earnestness and military la tude. When we disembarked the plane I st for a few moments, bags in hand, staring i the Royal Society Range on the far side of fro McMurdo Sound. Sunlight pooled there in glaciers like molten manganese. I did not w the pressure of time to build again; one g through so much to leave the hammering hawking of civilization behind. But then the ney was there, insistent.

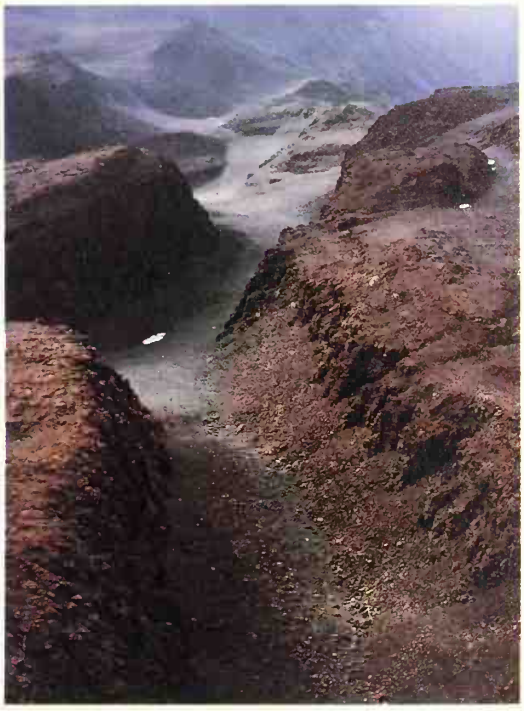
The next day I flew with several other visit in a Navy helicopter to a place called L Vanda, about forty-five miles northwest McMurdo, in the Wright Valley in Victo Land. The New Zealanders have an advan base there, a cluster of five or six small buildi chained to the ground against the wind. T New Zealanders were gracious but demure. took only a few minutes to show us around th station—spartan, solar-powered, snugly arrang Our hosts then served us fresh scones and pot soup. Their hospitality, the cordial welco that New Zealanders customarily extend to v tors in this peregrine region, is an Antarctic t dition. The richness of those moments is vivid contrast to the wildness of the land. T pale green buildings are like a pod of do alone on the North Atlantic.

I asked the station manager if I might retu if there was room. Marvelous, he said. A w later, after visiting with a score of scientists research bases and field camps, after a tour Shackleton's historic base camp at Cape Ro

Barry Lopez is a contributing editor to Harper's Magazine. Crossing Open Ground, *a collection of his essays, was recently published by Scribner's.*

and Scott's base at Cape Evans, both in a state of eerie, near perfect preservation, mesmerizing inside in their heroic gloom, I returned to Vanda.

The Wright and half a dozen other valleys at the northeastern end of the Transantarctic Mountains are collectively referred to as the dry valleys. It has not rained here in two million years. No animal abides, no plant grows. A persistent, sometimes ferocious wind has stripped the country to stone and gravel, to streamers of sand. The huge valleys stand stark as empty fjords. You look in vain for any conventional sign of human history—the vestige of a protective wall, a bit of charcoal, a discarded arrowhead. Nothing. There is no history, until you bore into the layers of rock or until the balls of your fingertips run the rim of a partially exposed fossil. At the height of the austral summer, in December, you smell nothing but the sun-beaten stone. In a silence dense as water, your eye picks up no movement but the sloughing of sand, seeking its angle of repose.



On the flight in from New Zealand it had occurred to me, from what I had read and heard, that Antarctica retained Earth's primitive link, however tenuous, with space, with the void that stretched out to Jupiter and Uranus. At the seabird rookeries of the Canadian Arctic or on the grasslands of the Serengeti, you can feel the vitality of the original creation; in the dry valleys you sense sharply what came before. The Archeozoic is like fresh spoor here.

I took several long walks in the Wright and adjacent Taylor valleys. I did not feel insignificant on these journeys, dwarfed or shrugged off by the land, but superfluous. It is a difficult landscape to enter, to develop a rapport with. It is not inimical or hostile, but indifferent, utterly remote, even as you stand in it. The light itself is aloof.

The dry valleys are breathtakingly beautiful. The air is so clear the eye can fasten effortlessly on the details, the sharp break of shadow creases, in distant mountains, making binoculars curiously redundant. The hues of yellow and brown, the tints of orange and red that elevate the sedimentary rocks above the igneous layers of granite, take the starkness out of the land but do not alter its line, which is bold, balanced, serene. Classic.

The stillness that permeates the valleys is visual as well as acoustical. On foot, traversing a landscape that is immense but simple, your point of view, looking right and left at the mountain walls or up the valley, changes only very slowly. I had sought this stillness; but unlike the stillness I'd found in similarly austere and deserted regions of the Earth—on the tundra of Ellesmere Island, in the Namib Desert—this stillness had an edge to it. I felt no security with the Earth here, no convincing epiphany of belief in the prevailing goodwill of human beings, which always seems in the offing in these irenic places. However the Earth consoles us in the troubling matter of civilization's acquisitiveness, its brutal disregard, this was not the landscape for it.

To say that nothing at all lives here is not true. Algae and other minute marine organisms have evolved in a handful of permanently frozen lakes (the ice of which insulates them from the cold and passes light for photosynthesis). And some yeasts, bacteria, blue-green algae, fungi, and lichens—a group of microorganisms collectively called crypto-endoliths—live inside the rocks, beneath the first few crystalline layers. A skua occasionally flies this far inland. But the long months of twilight and darkness, the intense cold, the failure of any but the most primordial forms of life to gain purchase here (and so serve as food for others)—these conditions and the wind militate against biology.

During the brief summer, it is warm enough for a few days or weeks to create meltwater; a few, inconsequential streams tumble down from the glaciers above the valleys. The sparkling surface of the water is aberrant, a false promise, the land's irony. The only really animate force here is the wind. It blows, always, from the interior, from the west—often, in the spring, at well over sixty knots. It wallops and scours the mountains, eroding and fracturing, sweeping

It is a difficult landscape to develop a rapport with. The light itself is aloof

Photograph by Eliot Porter © 1987, reprint courtesy of Little, Brown and Company

An animal dead for a decade may be so well preserved that it looks as if it might move off

clear the debris. It is this beast that has, too, made these huge, empty valleys the driest ground on Earth.

Uplifting in the Transantarctic Mountains took place so quickly here, apparently, that the mountains formed in this place alone a rampart against the East Antarctic ice sheet (which is the size of the United States). Cut off, the ice cannot flow down these valleys to the sea. Since then, each year's scant snowfall has been shattered and evaporated by the dry, incessant wind before it can accumulate. Only here (and at two other less spectacular sites on the Antarctic mainland, in the Bunger and Vestfold hills in East Antarctica) is the land open to the sky, not buried under ice and snow.

The wind, a katabatic or gravity-driven wind, enters the valleys after falling vertically nearly two miles from the summit of the East Antarctic ice sheet; it comes into the valleys with a discernible hunger, and its effect on the land, which it abrades and lacerates with bits of sand and ice, is often peculiar.

In the Olympus Range on the north side of the Wright Valley, high up on the slope near a place called Bull Pass, I found a thin vein of dolerite, a drab, coarse, gray-black igneous rock similar to basalt. At this outcrop it had broken into pieces, and each piece, sitting on a sand base like a stone on a jeweler's dop, had been polished by the wind to the smoothness and luster, if not the density, of marble. Yet it was not this, really, that gave them their character; it was how the wind had cut them. They had the faceting, the angularity and curve, the impervious facades, of modern buildings. Even at this scale—hand-size—what lay before me was an imposing field of dark monoliths.

They are called, after the wind, ventifacts.

Insofar as the dry valleys of Victoria Land are known to the outer world, they are known for four things: for these rocks, the essence, in their form, of modern sculpture; for a mineral, antarcticite (calcium chloride hexahydrate), discovered in local ponds so heavily laden with salt they do not freeze in winter, when the temperature rests at –60 degrees and –70 degrees Fahrenheit; for their similarity, it is widely believed, to the rainless deserts of Mars (the Viking lander would have found no life on this ground either); and for a scattering of mummified creatures on the valley floors, mostly young crabeater seals and, rarely, a penguin or skua.

No one is certain why the seals come up here. A good guess is that they are inexperienced. They wander up from the coast, sometimes traveling as far as forty miles inland, hunching their way over the gravel fields with—to judge from the few, fresh trails that have been found—intractable determination. But it is travel utterly in the wrong direction.

They succumb eventually to starvation on these errant journeys; but an animal dead for a decade may be so well preserved that it looks, as one approaches, as if it might move off. A seal more exposed to the wind might over several years arch up in a curve like half an automobile tire, head and rear flippers high in the air, its eye sockets bored out, its mouth agape, a goblin.

The taut skin of these desiccated animals feels smooth under the hand and hard, like water-polished stone. The wind freeze-dries their flesh. No predator bothers them. The faces, if they can be said to have an expression, are distraught, catatonic with a sudden, horrible misunderstanding of geography. (It seems reckless to insist that only endocrine secretions and neural structures are here, that naught else abides.) The peculiar cheek teeth, ornate with tiny, interlocking cusps, stand out boldly in their highly evolved but useless efficiency.

Whenever I encountered these animals I found it difficult to leave them. And when I left, often as not, I turned back. They were inconsolable. They had made an error. Their lips parted in some final, incoherent noise. They had, most of them, died alone. Some lay with the clouded eyes of the blind, preserved for years in abject disbelief.

In a week of ambling, of looking among mountain boulders hoodooed by the wind, of sitting in windless bights amid glacial debris, of lining out like a Dinka on the heels of my hands and one knee to taste the salt ponds, I found the dry valleys unfetchable. Whatever one might impute to this landscape, of beauty or horror, seemed hardly to take hold; my entreaties for conversation met almost always with monumental indifference. I have never felt so strongly that unsettling aloofness of the adult that a small child knows, and fears. It is hard to locate the reassurance of affection in these circumstances. And yet this land informs, some would say teaches, for all its indifference. I can easily imagine some anchorite here, meditating in his room of stone, or pausing before a seal shipwrecked in this polar desert.

Over the years, one comes to measure a place, too, not just for the beauty it may give, the balminess of its breezes, the insouciance and relaxation it encourages, the sublime pleasures it offers, but for what it teaches. The way in which it alters our perception of the human. It is not so much that you want to return to indifferent or difficult places, but that you want not to forget.

If you returned it would be to pay your respects, for not being welcomed. ■

BRAVE NEW FOODS

Forging a microwave cuisine

By Erik Larson

One recent morning, Federal Express stopped by my home and dropped off a two-foot-tall box labeled "dangerous goods." Inside, I knew, was my shipment of Hot Scoop. It came packed in twenty pounds of dry ice and smoked as I lifted it from its styrofoam case. A dry-ice mist crept across the floor—which was fitting, because Hot Scoop is one spooky product. It is a packaged hot-fudge sundae designed expressly for use in a microwave oven. The ice cream and fudge go into the oven together; due to the kinky physics of microwaves, the ice cream stays cold, the fudge gets hot.

The world gets a little braver.

Hot Scoop, conceived by food engineers in Milwaukee and now being modified for release this summer by Steve's Homemade Ice Cream, is one of a new generation of microwave foods that promise to change the tastes, scents, and textures of the things America eats and the way America eats them. These are brave new foods, indeed: microwave cakes, waffles, milk shakes, pizzas. On store shelves, they resemble the usual processed foods—except for a couple of wavy lines on the box and the word MICROWAVE printed in red. But these are the costliest, most intensively engineered foods in history, built to tap a gigantic new market that seemed to open overnight. In 1976 only 5 percent of American households possessed a microwave oven, even though the machines had been around for twenty years. Then it was not unusual for consumers to spend as much as $500 for a microwave. Now

one can be picked up for $47, on sale, and 70 percent of all households have at least one. Sometime during the night, America crossed a threshold: More homes now have microwave ovens than have dishwashers. An electromagnetic El Dorado beckons.

There remains this teensy problem: as far as food engineers are concerned, the microwave oven is one lousy cooking device. True, microwaves do some things beautifully. They steam vegetables, poach fish, boil water. Beyond this we enter the twilight world of microwave physics, where chickens won't broil, bread won't bake, soufflés won't rise; where no oven cooks quite the same as any other; where jars explode, bottles rupture, and sand melts to glass. And therein growls the engine that may forever alter food. Engineers gave up trying to change the way these ovens work; instead, they are struggling to make food behave the way it would if cooked in real ovens—an immense technical challenge, as it happens.

I leased a microwave oven so that my wife and I could sample the new foods. It was a big 700-watt number, handsome and black. We lived out wholly electromagnetic days, gnawing on the future, pondering the implications for unborn consumers everywhere. Some of these foods bear witness to the awesome might of American ingenuity. Some are yucky.

BREAKFAST

Folger's Coffee Singles

Pillsbury Microwave Pancakes

Swift Premium Brown 'n Serve Microwave Sausages

Belgian Chef Microwave Waffles

To appreciate these foods—why they look, smell, and behave the way they do, why they cost so much—it is first necessary to understand a few things about microwave history and physics. Here, then, is a short primer.

Microwaves are a form of electromagnetic energy, as are X rays and television transmissions. Waves broadcast by an oven are roughly the length of a mouse, which I find appropriate, given the story of the microwave cat—the one about the lady who dried her pet in a microwave oven, with disastrous results for cat

Erik Larson's first novel, A Good Chance of Dying, *will be published next year by Villard.*

Illustration by Barry Blitt

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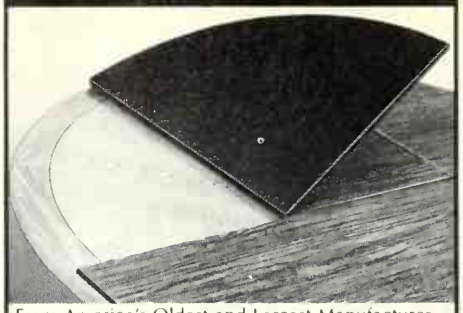

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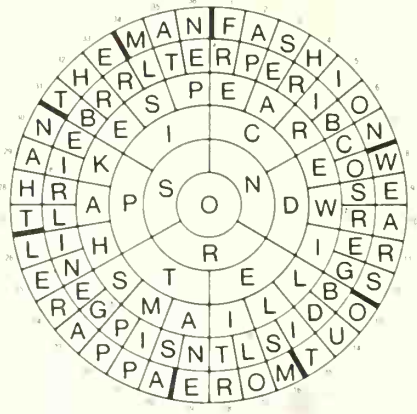

NOTES FOR "DRESS CIRCLE"

RADIALS: 1. CON(i)FER; 2. CAPON-E; 3. CANOES, anagram & Lit; 4. ANCHOR, anagram & Lit; 5. I(R)ONIC; 6. BR ON-CO; 7. CONNED, two meanings; 8. WOO-DEN; 9. S(o)N-OWED; 10. ONWARD, hidden; 11. I(RON)E-D; 12. DO SING; 13. BO(LDER (anagram)-O; 14. LOU-DER (reversal); 15. LO-ITER (anagram); 16. MOR(S)EL; 17. O(RIO)LE; 18. RIOTER(s), anagram; 19. ORNATE, anagram; 20. A(O)RT-AS; 21. FM-PORT; 22. P(ROMP)T; 23. STA(ORO)G, reversed; 24. RO(a)STER; 25. P(eddler)-HONES; 26. POLISH, two meanings; 27. POSTAL, anagram; 28. PH(A-ROS, anagram; 29. OKAPIS, hidden; 30. S(POKE)N; 31. BOTTES, anagram; 32. HOSIER, anagram; 33. OSIERS, anagram; 34. LIS-SOM, hidden; 35. P(A T)OIS(e); 36. P(ON)IES. FIFTH CIRCLE: a. PROS(CRIBE; b. B-RIDGES; c. SPLI(N)T; d. LINGER, hidden; e. TER(Rib-LE, anagram of TREE.

SOLUTION TO APRIL DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 64). G(RAHAM) GREENE: TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT. Rats are . . . ahead of us indisputably in one respect—they live underground. When the . . . bomb falls the rats will survive. What a wonderful empty world it will be for them, though I hope they will be wise enough to stay below.

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and appliance. It was the accidental meltdown of a candy bar, however, that led to the development of the first oven. In 1945, Percy L. Spencer, a Raytheon engineer, visited one of the company's radar labs and happened to stand in front of a magnetron tube, a device which at that time generated microwaves only for radar. Spencer's hands got warm, but the chocolate bar in his pocket *melted.* Intrigued, he put a bag of popcorn in front of the tube and made the world's first helping of microwave popcorn. Intrigued—a lesser man would have been petrified.

The first commercial microwave oven was introduced by Raytheon in 1955, but the concept became practical for home use only in 1967, when Raytheon's Amana subsidiary introduced its countertop Radarange, the first compact unit and the darling of future game shows. Amana's ads invited anyone with $600 in his pocket to experience "The WONDER of the Radarange." The idea initially was to do some real cooking from scratch with these machines. Cookbooks emerged in the early 1970s, first from Litton Industries and Sears, to encourage homemakers and enhance their sense of wonder. A 1972 cookbook declared: "The modern homemaker will be ever ready to receive unannounced visitors."

But today's microwave consumers do not want to cook. They want to throw things into the oven and gulp them down minutes later. The market has responded: In the first half of 1987, food companies introduced 439 new microwaveable products. William Piszek, marketing-research manager of Campbell Soup Company's Microwave Institute and a man who mixes words the way a virtuoso chef mixes spices, says: "If you don't get on the bandwagon, you're going to miss the boat."

Which, when it comes to engineering these foods, is easier said than done.

Ask a guy on the street how microwaves cook and he will tell you that they cook from the inside out. This is a myth, and it probably originated with the first overdone baked potato, its skin moist and pale, and its center charred black. Microwaves are ener-

gy, not heat; they make food molecules vibrate, causing them to gain and lose kinetic energy. The waves penetrate foods to depths up to two inches, and come from all directions, cooking wherever they strike. When a food has the right size and geometry, as potatoes do, the waves converge at the center and concentrate their power.

This energy is intense, and cannot be dampened. A microwave oven set at half power delivers full power, but for half the time. Such raw energy alters the more leisurely physics of conventional cooking but leaves room for some real fun: Put a raw egg in your neighbor's microwave and turn it on. The energy will generate a violent surge of vapor pressure inside the egg and the egg will explode, splattering yellow goo and pulverized shell over every inch of the oven cavity.

Yet, for all this energy, microwaves cannot brown or crisp the surface of foods. Both the cool air of the oven and the evaporation of moisture from the food keep the surfaces from drying and reaching the requisite temperatures. Foods, moreover, absorb microwave energy at wildly different rates. Microwaves will pass through ice leaving it nearly unmolested but will quickly incite water to boil. Hot Scoop—frozen ice cream in a pool of liquid topping—uses this phenomenon to its advantage. But the same phenomenon can lead to runaway heating—as frozen food thaws, the part that thaws first scavenges most of the microwave energy. This allows us to experience the wonder of a TV dinner that is frozen and charred at the same time.

LUNCH

United Dairy Farmers
Micro Malt or Micro Shake
Lunch Bucket Hot Chili With Beans
Pillsbury Microwave French Bread Pizza (Pepperoni)
Betty Crocker Pop Secret Microwave Popcorn

Robert Schiffmann, perhaps the country's foremost independent microwave specialist, lives and works in his laboratory, a Manhattan brownstone a block west of Central Park. Once a professional ballet dancer,

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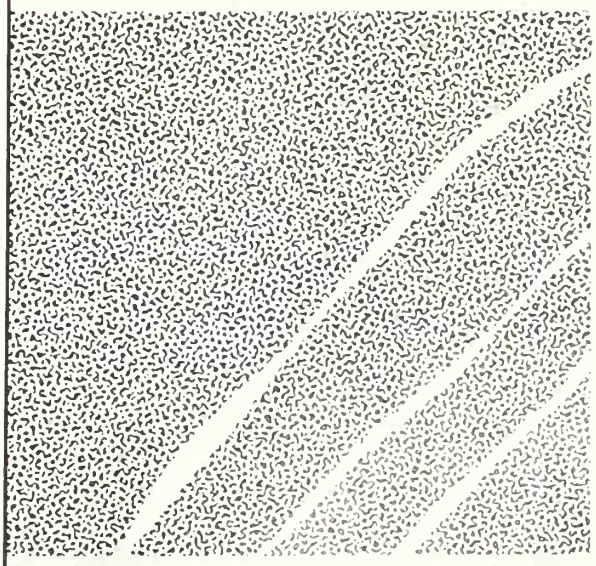

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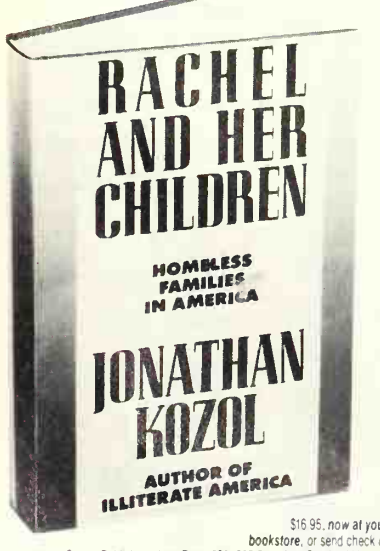

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Schiffmann got into the food business after answering an ad seeking a physical chemist "with a sense of humor." He spent the next decade studying the physical chemistry of doughnuts for Doughnut Corporation of America. Now he spends his time trying to make new food products burn and explode and soar from their containers, testing so he can advise engineers how to make microwave foods that work safely and perform properly. His clients include General Mills, General Foods, Kellogg, and Campbell Soup. Recently, Schiffmann studied popcorn, and considers himself something of a popcorn gadfly.

More than any other product, popcorn illustrates both the promise of microwave foods and the exasperation of microwave cooking. On the positive side, microwave popcorn rejuvenated a dead market. There are now some seventy-five microwave popcorn products competing for shelf space, and they account for nearly half the sales of all microwave foods. Consumers pay dearly for the stuff. At my local Giant supermarket you can buy a box of Pop Secret for $1.99. Each box contains 10.5 ounces of unpopped kernels. For four cents less, you can buy four *pounds* of ordinary Giant popcorn and get a sack big enough to sandbag your local levee.

But microwave popcorn is a cantankerous product. It works well in some ovens, fails in others; in all cases, it requires close timing and a measure of forbearance not found in the typical consumer. Schiffmann tested four leading products in three ovens, rated at 400, 600, and 700 watts (there is no such thing as a standard microwave oven). In the first tests, he followed the packaging instructions to the letter. All the popcorns did well in the 600-watt oven, but showed extensive scorching in the higher *and* lower-power models. Next he conducted what he calls abuse-testing, on the assumption that consumers are likely to overcook their popcorn in order to reduce the number of unpopped kernels. But the intensity of microwave energy leaves little margin for error. "With every product I tested, if you went two minutes more than the optimal time, you charred the product," Schiffmann told me as we chewed some Amazing Glaze, a microwave popcorn he helped develop that soaks itself in a pool of melted caramel. "I'm talking black char, melting packages, that kind of thing."

How, then, do you write heating directions for consumers who are notoriously unwilling to read them, let alone follow them, and whose ovens are all different?

The popcorn makers give instructions requiring unprecedented precision. Consider Pop Secret: "Set timer for 5 minutes and LISTEN CAREFULLY. STOP microwave when popping slows to 2 TO 3 SECONDS BETWEEN POPS. Note your popping time, and for next bag, set timer accordingly. Carefully open bag—contents are extremely hot! IMPORTANT: Do not leave microwave unattended while popping popcorn. Never microwave bag of popcorn more than 5 minutes 30 seconds." The package has more red print, more underlining, more capital letters than a can of Drano.

Precision alone, however, cannot solve another problem: Too many of these unpopped kernels turn up at the bottoms of bags of microwave popcorn. This is a wavelength dilemma. As the popcorn pops, the number of unpopped kernels shrinks; their mass becomes too small for the microwaves to heat, but stays large enough to annoy consumers and maybe split a few fillings. Schiffmann's analogy: "If I had a flea in my microwave oven, he could live in there for his whole life with the energy on—he's so small by comparison to the wavelength that basically he becomes invisible. But if I had a box of fleas in there, I'd roast 'em."

Which brings us to "Low-observables technology." What the popcorn people needed was a way to intensify the heat in their bags and force those leftover kernels to burst.

Deposition Technology Inc., a San Diego company once deeply involved in Stealth research—the Pentagon's program to develop a bomber undetectable by radar—came up with an answer. It had developed ways of depositing microwave-absorbent alloys into super-thin, flexible films. Could these films be used in popcorn

ags? Hunt-Wesson, the folks who ake Orville Redenbacher's pop-orn, was first to ask DTI about it, ut Pillsbury was first to actually use he technology, says Robert Petca-ich, DTI's vice president for new roduct development. Pillsbury em-eds a stainless-steel film, called a susceptor," into its bag. The bag oes in the oven, film side down. Vhen exposed to microwaves, the teel acts like a built-in hot plate. The npopped kernels fall on the film and et an extra blast of conventional eat.

Now you see susceptors every-here. Ore-Ida Microwave Crinkle Cuts come with their own susceptor-oated cardboard pan, the Qwik Crisp tray. Belgian Chef waffles come vith four-sided, film-lined cardboard oxes—in effect, pop-up ovens.

Food engineers are trying other actics, too. Meat companies now narket pre-cooked, pre-seared meats, nicrowaveable in minutes. Compa-ies are rolling out microwaveable ntrees that can sit on an ordinary tore shelf at room temperature for ears, thereby sidestepping the diffi-ulty of cooking frozen foods. Hor-nel's new "Top Shelf" entrées cook n two minutes or less, which saves he consumer four precious minutes hat would otherwise be lost prepar-ng a poky old Le Menu Chicken 'armigiana.

DINNER

Tetley Microwave Iced Tea

Top Shelf Italian Style Lasagna

Ore-Ida Microwave Crinkle Cuts (with Qwik Crisp tray)

Pillsbury Microwave Yellow Cake Mix

What will consumers come to ac-ept? What kinds of foods will their ids come to know and love? Studies how that consumers are very forgiv-ng when it comes to microwave foods. They readily swap quality for speed. Given all the things microwave ovens annot do, it seems likely that foods vill change color and texture. In some lark corners of this country, people ow make grilled-cheese sandwiches in heir microwaves. Will pale and moist grilled-cheese sandwiches be the grilled heeses of choice a decade down the ine? What intangibles will the elec-tromagnetic family of the future miss?

The best dinners are like good nov-els: the slow unfolding of the plot (dicing, chopping, or in the greatest epics, the twenty-four-hour mari-nade, the seventy-two-hour sauerbra-ten!); the growing conflict (how much salt? is the roux black or just burned?); and finally, the climax, a satisfying denouement (that last cos-sack's charge, spoon and fork flailing, to mix the pesto and pasta before the pasta cools).

Microwave dinners are jacket blurbs.

You can't beat a microwave oven for speed. But you can't beat a con-ventional oven for suspense—the sweet torture of baking and roasting, the aromas that drift through the house long before the dinner hour.

What prompted these thoughts was my first encounter with a micro-wave cake. I made one the other night, Pillsbury's yellow variety. You prepare the mix, then pour it into a pan provided with the box. The pan is plastic—no metal in microwaves—and round, to keep microwave energy from concentrating in any corners. Measured from the inside, the pan is 2.75 inches high—just right for the wavelengths broadcast by most ovens. The cake took seven minutes, a fifth of the time needed for an ordi-nary Pillsbury mix, and was fun to watch: It billowed like a settling sheet.

But it did not smell like cake. It did not look like cake. It had the feel of sweaty human flesh. It was small and pale yellow, not a bit brown. If you saw it on the kitchen counter, you would try to wipe the sink with it.

I tried to get the folks at Pillsbury to talk to me about this cake. A com-pany spokesman politely declined. "It's too proprietary," he said. He did say the cakes were a success, how-ever, and that this has prompted Pillsbury to introduce microwave brownies; that Pillsbury expects its sales of microwave-only foods to top $225 million in fiscal 1988, com-pared with $172 million in 1987.

And as he hung up the phone—I may be imagining this—I swear I heard him cry out: You clean the oven, pal. You'll find the Brillo under the sink. ■

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IFS

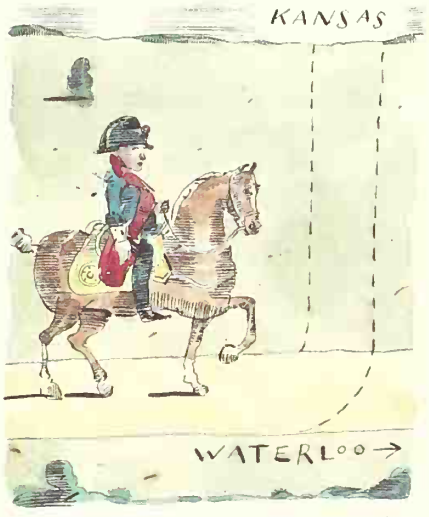
Destiny and the Archduke's chauffeur

By Hans Koning

The *ifs* of history are numberless. For everything that has happened we can, of course, line up infinite alternatives. But not much is gained from this, except for the obvious observation that human history is a very iffy affair.

The *ifs* I am pursuing here are "last-minute ifs"—that is, I am not going to lose myself and my readers by speculating about what if there had been no Bering Strait or English Channel or, zooming in on our time, no Franklin Delano Roosevelt. A "last-minute if" is: What *if*, in February 1933, Giuseppe Zangara's hand had not been pushed aside by Mrs. Cross in Miami and his bullet had killed Roosevelt rather than Chicago mayor Anton Cermak?

This example gets right to the point. Most of my ifs are life-or-death ifs. And that raises the well-known dilemma: Are certain individuals of crucial importance to the flow of history? The teaching of history has moved away from the listing of names and dates toward the study of demographic and economic currents. So much so that the children in our most modern schools aren't quite sure whether the Civil War came before or after Prohibition. Tolstoy wrote that Napoleon did not shape his era but that the era had to produce a Napoleon. Indeed, I find it hard to accept that the chance life or death of one person could decide the lives and deaths of millions. But I suspect that the truth, a mystical truth recorded somewhere beyond our ken, lies somewhere in between. A few individuals have influenced destiny, but in the long run history exhibits its own inherent logic. On this timetable, though, our own lives are very short runs.



If that German officer who moved von Stauffenberg's briefcase from one side of the table leg to the other in Hitler's headquarters (July 20, 1944) had minded his own business, then the bomb in the briefcase would have killed the Führer. A German peace junta would have taken over in Berlin and the war machine would have disintegrated. The Allies would have occupied Germany ten months sooner. As many as a million prisoners' lives (Jews, Soviet POWs, other Displaced Persons) would have been saved. Politically, things would have been chaotic. There would have been an unresolved tussle among the occupying powers concerning the junta's authority. The SS would have gone underground. The myth of the dagger in the back—that Germany was defeated in the First World War not by the enemy in the field but by the enemy within, the defeatists, the pacifists, the Jews—would have been revived with convincing force. A generation of Germans would have been taught that Hitler could have won the war with his secret weapons, if only he hadn't been betrayed by effete aristocrats bought by American-Jewish gold. Germany would have had to avenge itself in World War III.

If after the 1938 Munich deal Hitler had waited until 1941 to attack Poland, and if he had spent that time making the West feel good about the deal, pretending all he really wanted was peace and cooperation, then England and France would have rolled over like puppies; sour lefties and Jewish intellectuals—the only voices to express skepticism about the Führer's miraculous conversion—would have been dismissed as warmongers and left out in the political cold. The Führer would have sent Hess and Ribbentrop around to the various spas of Europe to discuss disarmament and trade. He would have befriended Franco and

Hans Koning's new novel, Acts of Faith, *was published last month by Henry Holt. He wrote about East Germany for* Harper's Magazine *last November.*

Illustration by Barry Blitt

helped him with reconstruction aid. In those extra two years, Hilter would have tripled or quadrupled the advantage he held over England and France in planes and tanks, and he would have developed landing craft. He would not, however, have started research on an atomic bomb, for Hitler did not have that kind of imagination; moreover, he hated Einsteinian—"Jewish"—physics. There would have been a lot of street fighting in the West between fascists and leftists: the hidden admiration among Western European conservatives for Hitler's brand of red-baiting and "law and order" would have become respectable or nearly so; the various National Front, Black Front, and Croix de Feu bands, with their memberships increased tenfold, would have tried to conquer the streets. In the spring of 1942, Hitler would have sprung upon the world on a weekend morning and defeated France even faster than he did in 1940. Spain would have taken Gibraltar. England and the Soviet Union (as far as the Urals) would soon have been occupied. After that Japan would have taken Siberia and all of China. In the late 1940s the United States would have used atomic bombs to liberate a Europe already three-quarters dead.

If Sirhan Sirhan had only wounded Robert Kennedy (June 5, 1968) in Los Angeles after Kennedy had won the California primary, then the recovered candidate would have been nominated in Chicago (where Mayor Richard Daley, an old ally of the Kennedys, would not have let his police knock old ladies through the plate-glass windows of the Hilton), and he would have beaten Nixon in November. There would have been at least one more assassination attempt, but if RFK had made it to the White House, he would have stopped the war in Vietnam almost immediately. The political machine would have gone into high gear against him and two roads would have lain ahead: either Kennedy would have been tagged as the man who had "lost Vietnam" and he would have been an ineffectual president, succeeded by a long line of belligerent Republicans, including Ronald Reagan (the two million or more American and Vietnamese lives he saved would have been lost on other battlefields); or he would have won so much popular support for getting us out of Vietnam that he could have inaugurated an Age of Aquarius. It would not have lasted indefinitely, but we would be living in a greener land today.

If William III, the Dutch stadtholder who became king of England after its Glorious Revolution of 1688, had not been a homosexual—or, being one, had managed to close his eyes and think of England—then he would have gotten his wife Mary, daughter of King James II, with child. An Anglo-Dutch dynasty would have begun and Holland and England would have become a joined kingdom. The House of Hanover would have stayed in Hanover. Through the new dynasty and its kings, queens, ministers, and mistresses in London, the regents of Holland (who had more money and more ships than all the English lords) would largely have run the affairs of Europe. England would have been steered away from America toward the East Indies, and the thirteen colonies might well have found themselves abandoned rather than having to go through the whole rigamarole of George Washington, war, and the Declaration of Independence. Faced with this Protestant superpower, France would not have become the *Grande Nation* of the eighteenth century, and its kings and marquesses might not have risen to quite those pinnacles of megalomania and greed symbolized by Marie Antoinette and her cake. There might have been no French Revolution. European history would have been less inspiring and also less bloody. Without a Napoleon to stir them up, the Germans would have stayed somnolent for another half century or longer, and we might just now be ready to embark on the First World War.

If Cleopatra had been less stunning, Marc Antony would have kept his mind on the affairs of state and not been eliminated from the race for Roman emperor. He would have continued sharing power with his militaristic brother-in-law, Octavian, whom he despised, and would have countered, diluted, and sabotaged Octavian's ideas for Roman order, might, and imperial tyranny. That way he would have hastened the rise of Christianity and the fall of the Roman Empire by a hundred years. Everything thereafter would have happened one hundred years sooner.

If Archduke Franz Ferdinand's chauffeur had not taken a wrong turn in Sarajevo (June 28, 1914) and then backed up to precisely the spot where Gavrilo Princip was waiting with a pistol to assassinate the Archduke, then the First World War would have broken out just the same.

If Lenin, after his second stroke, had regained his strength during the last year of his life (1923), he would have acted on his intent to curb Stalin's power. Trotsky, not Stalin, would have been his successor. Since Trotsky was the man of "permanent revolution," Western anti-communism would have been even stronger. Millions of Russians—peasants, politicians, army officers—would still have been alive in 1941 when Germany attacked. But the attack might have had our blessings, and Trotsky's USSR might have succumbed for lack of industrial capacity.

If FDR had kept Henry Wallace as his vice-presidential candidate for the 1944 elections, Wallace would have become the thirty-third president of the United States. He would have had the worst press since Benedict Arnold. Wallace, an innate pacifist, would not, however, have dropped the atom bombs on Japan. The secret would have been kept for who knows how much longer.

If Joseph Ginoux, a café owner in Arles, had allowed Vincent van Gogh to pay for his lodging in paintings (as Ginoux was tempted to do but then did not, put off by his customers' derision) instead of evicting him, then Vincent would have had some peace and security, and his breakdown might have happened later and been less severe. He would have painted for five, perhaps, ten years more. The people of Arles wouldn't have drawn up their petition to have him put in an asylum. In a less hostile and threatening world, his later work would have

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Gaza

Are its inhabitants being "subjugated" by the Israelis?

If that mythical man from Mars were to appear today, he might believe that Gaza — that tiny strip of land wedged between Israel and Egypt, and home to about 650,000 Palestinian Arabs, is the flash point of the world. There are daily banner headlines in the newspapers and extensive coverage on television newscasts. Howling mobs of teenagers, armed with bricks and Molotov cocktails, confront and defy Israeli security forces. Inevitably, people get hurt and die. The U.S. public is uncomfortable and bewildered.

What are the facts?

■ In 1922, together with the rest of Palestine, Gaza was entrusted to Britain, as a League of Nations mandate, committing them to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine. But they created the Kingdom of Trans-Jordan, to the east of the Jordan River, 77% of the original country. In 1947, the U.N. offered a partition plan for the remainder, to be divided into a Jewish and an Arab state. Gaza was to be part of the Arab state. The Jews agreed to the partition. The Arabs refused. No Jewish state, however minuscule, could be allowed on "sacred Arab soil". On the day that Israel declared its independence in 1948, five Arab armies invaded the new state. The newly founded state of Israel, rather than dying at its birth, defeated the invading armies. Jordan, however, was able to occupy Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank") and the old city of Jerusalem. Egypt occupied Gaza. Their administration lasted for 19 years. It ended with the 1967 Six-Day War, when Israel routed the Egyptians and Jordanians in defensive response to Colonel Nasser and King Hussein's aggressions. During these years, the Palestinians voiced no demand for self-determination. The subject matter, then as now, was not Israel's "occupation", but rather Israel's existence.

■ During the 1948 War of Jewish Liberation, many Arabs fled from their homes to Gaza for what they expected to be a short sojourn. Because, exhorted by their leaders and by blood-curdling broadcasts, they were urged to vacate Palestine so as not to interfere with the invading Arab armies. They would be able to return very soon, to recover their homes and their property — and that of the Jews.

■ Things didn't turn out that way 40 years ago. Gaza became one of the most densely populated spots on earth. The inhabitants could not go to Egypt, nor would any other Arab country admit them. And why not? Because it served the political purposes of the Arab nations to leave these poor people in the pitiful condition in which they find themselves — still refugees, still living in squalid camps with their children and grandchildren, 40 years after their flight. The Arab nations could easily relieve the population pressure and the despair in Gaza by participating in and assisting with the programs of Israel and international organizations for the absorption and economic development of the refugees. They won't do that, and it doesn't look as though they ever will. They wish to keep the wound festering. What is the ultimate goal from which the Arabs have never deviated? It is the dismantling and the "Lebanonization" of the State of Israel.

■ What could the Israelis do to mitigate the situation? Not much more than they are doing now. Under Israeli administration, and under their policy of open borders, Gazans can freely move between the "strip" and Israel, "West Bank", Jordan, and anywhere else that they might be allowed to travel. The political and personal liberties that Gazans enjoy, their standard of living, level of education, social and public health services are incomparably higher than ever before. 60,000 Gazans work in Israel. Apart from the dole of the world, these jobs are the main income of the population — the economy would totally collapse without them. Can Israel "walk away" and relinquish this area? It is impossible, because the PLO would immediately re-establish military bases and make them launching pads for attacks against Israel's main cities, only a few miles away. That's what happened daily under Egyptian administration before 1967.

Gaza is a tragedy — people are in misery and young men are dying. Like all other problems dividing Arabs and Jews, this too could be settled by good will and direct negotiation. The 1978 Camp David Accords provide the framework for such negotiation and for establishment of autonomy for Palestinian Arabs. The PLO totally reject Camp David. Their acceptance would relieve the plight of the Palestinian Arabs and assure their rights, as well as safeguard Israel's security and existence.

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reached an unimaginable purit Gauguin and Picasso would have s out from a different platform; twent eth-century painting would ha been different. (And Ginoux's hei would have been the richest people France.)

If in February 1961 there hadn been a blizzard halting all Sunday p pers in New York City, then tho unread glowing reviews would ha gotten my novel *A Walk With Love an Death* onto the best-seller list.

I put that final, private *if* in becau I have always had trouble agreein with what my mother used to te me—and what Winston Churchi believed—that "At the end of day, is all for the best."

May Index Sources

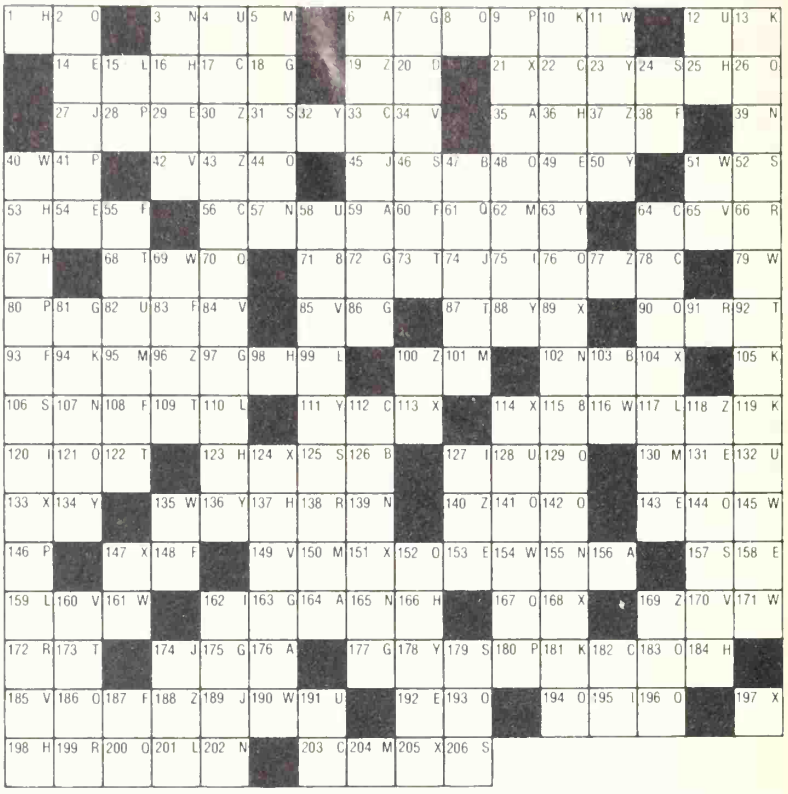
1,2 *Congressional Quarterly* (Washin ton); **3** Yankelovich Clancy Shulm (Westport, Conn.); **4** Congressional R search Service; **5** Dept. of State; **6,7** P triotic Union (Bogota)/*New York Time* **8** *Fohla de São Paulo;* **9** U.S. Attaché (S Paulo); **10** Bureau of Labor Statistic **11,12** M&A Data Base (Philadelphia **13** National Pachinko Parlor Owners A sociation (Tokyo); **14** Japanese Embas (Washington); **15,16** Dept. of State; **1** Yesh Gvul (Jerusalem); **18** Data Ba Project on Palestinian Human Righ (Chicago); **19** A. Craig Copetas, *Rega die's* (Washington); **20** Korean Econom Planning Board (Seoul); **21** N.Y.C. B reau of Health Statistics and Analysis; **2** Office of Population Affairs, Health ar Human Services (Washington); **2** N.Y.C. Human Resources Administr tion; **24** Peter Marcuse, Columbia Un versity (N.Y.C.); **25** Shelby Coun Sheriff's Office (Memphis); **26** Econ metrics (Johannesburg)/*Time;* **27** Co solidated Gold Fields (London); **2** J&B/*Spy* Poll (N.Y.C.); **29,30** *U.S. Ne & World Report* (Washington); **31,3** Midge Wilson and Jacqueline Taylor, D Paul University (Chicago); **33** Rando House (N.Y.C.); **34** *Gorman's New Pro uct News* (Chicago); **35** Steven Carve and Tom Kelly, Cornell University (Ith ca); **36** Continental Baking Compar (St. Louis); **37** Burns Bintliff (Millsbor Del.); **38** Dept. of Commerce; **39,4** State Dept. Nicaraguan Humanitaria Assistance Office.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 65

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 70.



CLUES

A. Ice cream and cake, e.g.
156 35 164 176 59 / 6

B. Song; kind of church music
71 103 115 47 126

C. Natural result; excrescence
17 22 78 182 56 / 64 203 33 112

D. Reflect, muse; believe, suppose
194 141 144 20 152

E. (Followed by WORD F) 1860 George Eliot novel (3 wds.)
54 143 158 29 192 131 14 49 / 153

F. See WORD E (2 wds.)
108 38 93 148 60 83 187 55

G. Unprecedented (hyph.)
7 97 175 163 81 18 177 72 / 86

H. Sense of humor
67 198 166 137 16 53 25 36 / 184 1 98 123

I. Curses; solemn promises
120 127 75 195 162

J. Card game played two against two
45 27 189 74 174

K. Lapwing
94 10 13 105 181 119

L. 1775 comedy by R. B. Sheridan (after *The*)
110 117 159 15 201 99

M. Raise in value or importance
204 62 95 150 101 130 5

N. Formal account, declaration, etc.
155 102 57 39 202 165 139 107 / 3

O. Surreptitious, secret
186 2 48 26 121 183 76 193 / 129 142 44

P. Food fish of the family Mugilidae
9 28 180 80 41 146

Q. Sent out
196 8 61 90 167 70 200

R. Dig with a spade; make deep research
199 91 138 172 66

S. Unmerited contemptuous treatment
106 157 31 46 24 52 125 206 / 179

T. Irritates, provokes, stings
73 109 87 68 92 173 122

U. Field of education involving set theory (2 wds.)
126 191 12 82 132 58 4

V. Thrilled, delighted
42 65 170 84 185 85 34 160 / 149

W. Long-stemmed clay pipe
79 69 51 11 190 40 135 171 / 161 116 154 145

X. 1921 Eugene O'Neill play (2 wds. after *The*)
113 197 124 104 114 168 151 21 / 147 133 89 205

Y. Am. goatsucker related to the whippoorwill
23 32 63 136 111 88 178 50 / 134

Z. Agreeable excitement
188 30 37 100 169 43 118 140 / 19 96 77

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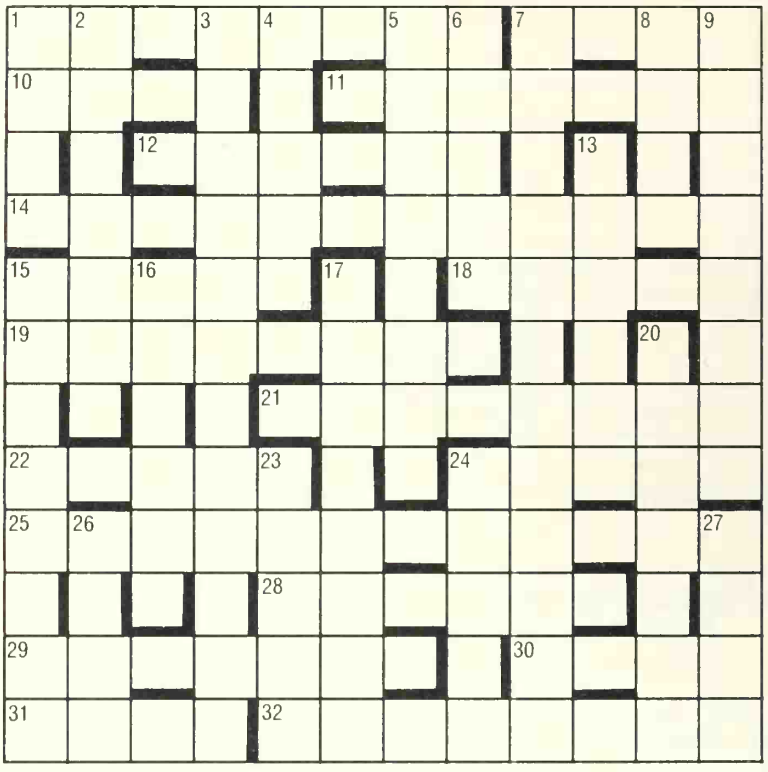

Quadrilateral

By E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

Note that the diagram has four-way symmetry . . . that is, the bar pattern remains the same no matter which side is "up." Therefore, the clues have been grouped into foursomes, with the four entries sharing symmetry. But they are listed randomly within each foursome.

Clue answers include five capitalized words. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 70.

1A, 32A, 9D, 15D (8)
- Home for a kind of singer? Could be bardic, e.g. (*two words*)
- The least little thing disturbed spy, a little bit put out
- Test out mower that's said to be vehicle for kids
- Note unfortunate demise from medical treatments

7A, 31A, 1D, 27D (4)
- Bore's present . . . no bull
- Make a lasting impression in *Sweet Charity*
- Way in which legatee's hiding
- Influenza bug's beginning to make a mess of things

10A, 30A, 8D, 26D (4)
- Tense given in school orally
- Not quite up for Italian wine
- Financial obligation held by liverymen on margin
- Boo this English nurse's folksinging

11A, 29A, 2D, 20D (7)
- Italian port, or "vino," goes bad by the liter
- Beards spy coming back after fall guy
- It's evil swallowing fifth of whiskey . . . that's a lot of booze
- Tramp crashed parties

12A, 28A, 13D, 16D (6)
- Sounds like the puzzle maker's old ship
- Reformed curate is more critical
- Showing no interest, I'd first turn over some real estate
- Roam around, absorbed by atmosphere from Moroccan port

14A, 25A, 3D, 7D (12)
- This is a problem, for orthodontist gets the angle all wrong
- Give Scotch after marijuana *and* sue . . . what kind of jazz is this? (*hyph.*)
- Rejoicing about reconstituted peas is petty economizing
- No curability is possible from the use of both eyes

15A, 24A, 6D, 23D (5)
- L.A. football player (back) is onetime Yankee slugger
- Most certainly gab about boxing wins
- Without resistance, captures crows
- Inhabitant of the Caucasus almost tossed out

18A, 22A, 4D, 24D (5)
- Greek community showing a lot of culture
- Object to following Democrat as previously done
- Climbed without energy to burn
- Kind of acid found in most of spleen

19A, 21A, 5D, 17D (8)
- Embraced in rough cuddle
- Instrument in auto rode, to me, awkwardly
- The English boasted narrow down sweater
- Resembling today's music rendered by Kirk and Cole?

Contest Rules: Send completed diagram with name and address to "Quadrilateral," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's Magazine*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. Winners' names will be printed in the July issue. Winners of the March puzzle, "Send a Letter," are Bettina Conner, Washington, D.C.; Daniel E. Goldman, Brookline, Massachusetts; and Daniel A. Moran, East Lansing, Michigan.

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: June

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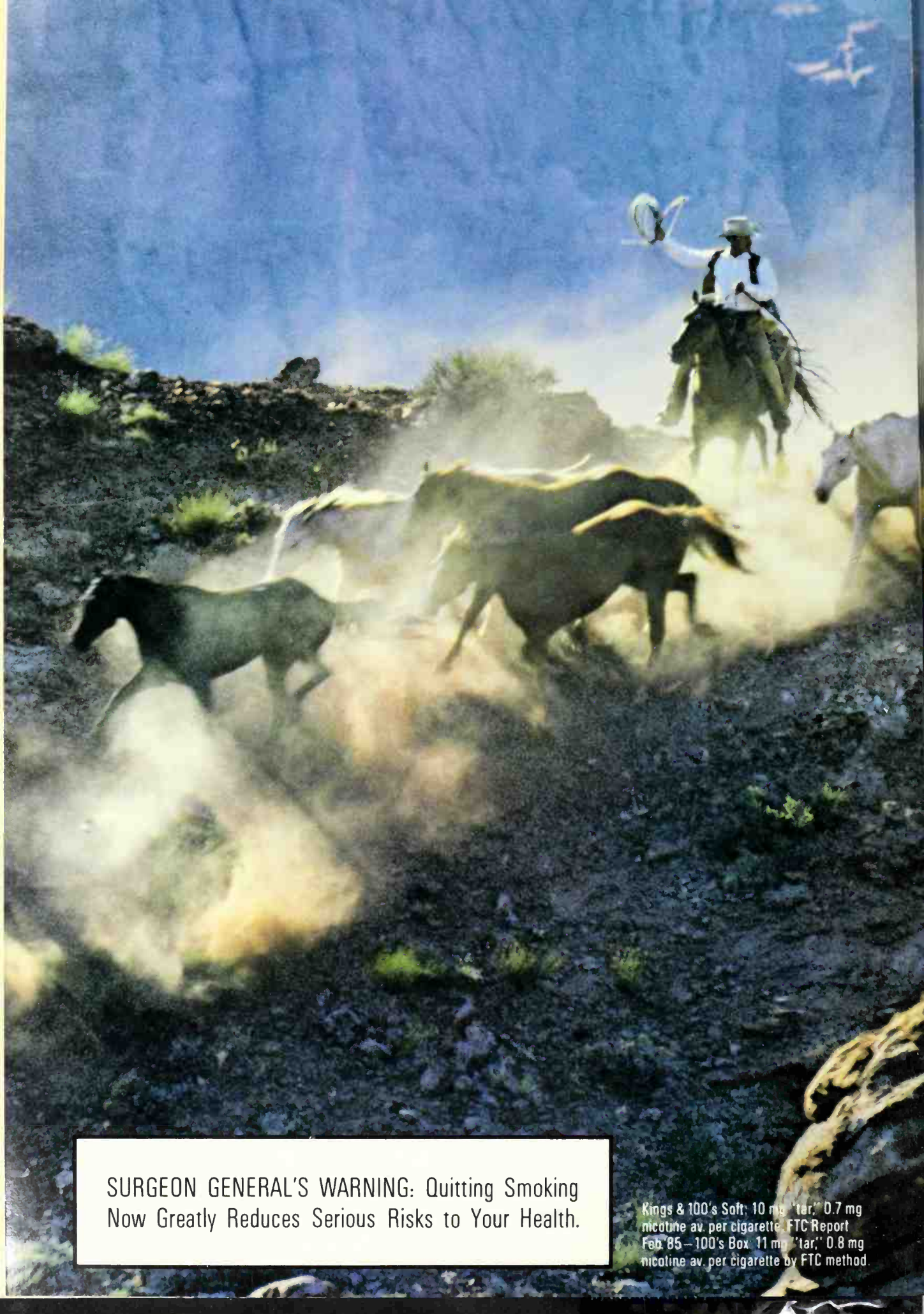

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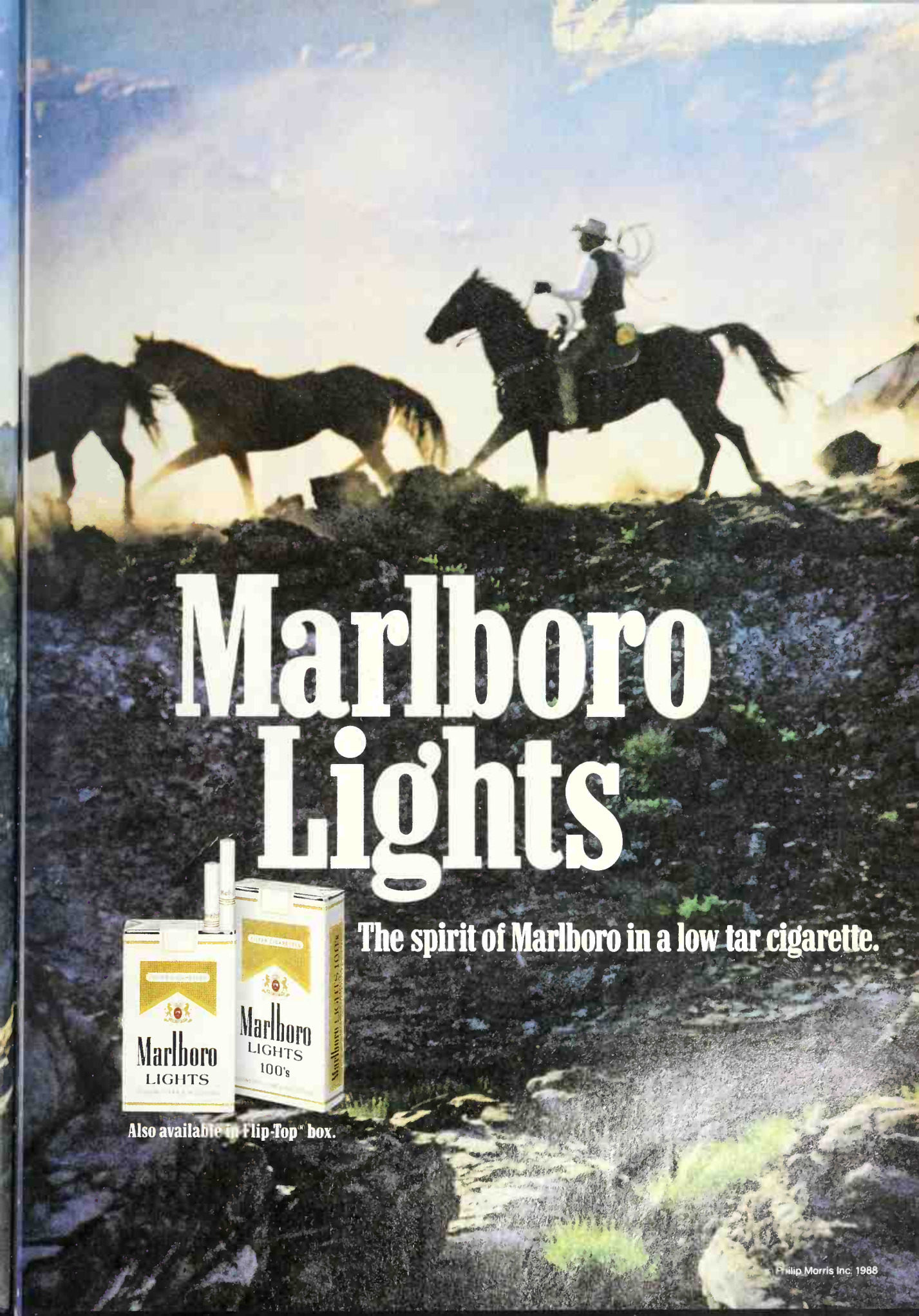
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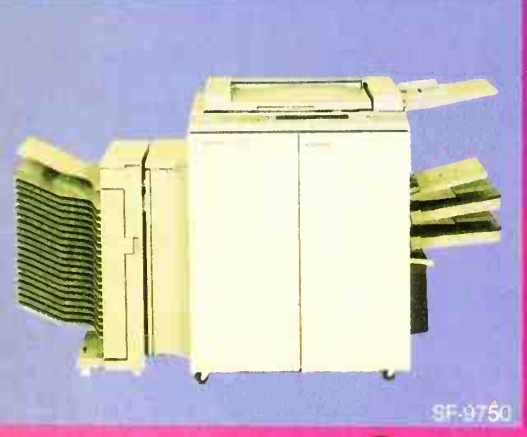
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LETTERS

And Now for Some Bad News

To my chagrin, the four cover stories in the March issue of *Harper's Magazine* were about suicide, the dying environment, worldwide financial panic, and a fictionalized labor riot. These articles were less instructive individually than when considered as a grim whole; they all espouse abstraction over life, intellectual construction of reality over direct experience, and despair over hope.

This enervated philosophy may be grist for the *Harper's* mill, but it need not be so for the rest of us. Contrary to Edward Hoagland's suicidal logic ["The Urge for an End"], we never "simply tire" of our "dreams or values," we merely forget and must relearn them.

Despite David Quammen's touristy claim ["Brazil's Jungle Blackboard"] of our planet's disease and his belittling of efforts to produce a palliative, we need not understand the big picture in order to help out.

Craig S. Karpel may find amusement in the embarrassing end of American hegemony ["Panic on the Bahnhofstrasse"]—as evident in the plight of a retired military man who made his fortune off lonely GI's in Vietnam and lost it in last October's financial crash—but the individual Western citizen is still justified in maintaining dignity and hope.

And finally, although William Kennedy would like us to believe that poverty, drink, violence, Christianity, and capitalism are life's true evils ["The Hills and the Creeks (Albany, 1850)"], ignorance of self and the world are the only real sins. Reading about exposed brains, ejected teeth, and gouged eyes, while entertaining, makes one none the wiser.

As one of this nation's leading journals of *ideas*, *Harper's Magazine* should show us that an intellectual life is a worthy life. Tell us something we don't know and give us the hint of a new truth.

David Netzel
Denver, Colo.

Harper's Magazine welcomes Letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters are subject to editing. Letters must be typed double-spaced; volume precludes individual acknowledgment.

Solutions

A possibly troubled reader of Edward Hoagland's essay ["The Urge for an End," March] might consider the following: people kill themselves for ordinary—not extraordinary—reasons; the motives for suicide are complex, and the thought of suicide, when a person is confronted with what appears to be an insurmountable problem, is more normal than abnormal. But as a clinical psychologist

ho works with suicidal people, I fail
) see any merit in romanticizing the
ontemplation of suicide. It is an ugly
usiness and the best laid plans often
il to produce the desired results.

If, every morning, the newspapers
ublished the medical results of yes-
rday's failed suicides, many fewer
eople would be tempted by such a
glamorous" exit.

Studies have repeatedly shown that
ie majority of us, at one time or an-
her, think of suicide as a solution.
lore importantly, the depressions
iat lead to thoughts of self-destruc-
on are usually temporary, and those
iat last longer than a few weeks are
eatable emotional illnesses. Often,
hat time will not heal, a therapist
in.

Finally, having spent time with the
irvivors of suicide—the people who
ust go on with their lives after the
neral—I understand that the person
ho kills himself, if he had any feel-
gs at all for his loved ones, would
ot have hurt them to such a degree if
e had been thinking clearly. Suicide
the least noble cause of death. It is
o much solution for too temporary a
oblem.

ul Quinnett
heney, Wash.

I am of Edward Hoagland's genera-
on and found his essay extremely
sorbing. There is a simple lack of
spect and care toward older people
iat makes the daily business of life
most too much to bear. We are mis-
eated by those who occupy positions
"power," including bus drivers who
in't be bothered to wait for us to
itch up with the bus, bank tellers
ho consider the elderly incapable
nd, I think, often resent that they
ay have less money in the bank than
any of us do), and salespeople who
patiently walk away when ap-
oached by an older person. All add
ieir little mite to a pile of insults,
nysical and emotional. Eventually,
ie burden becomes such that one
onders if life is worth the constant
sult.

Other factors, too, bring on the
ought of suicide. Some of us are di-
orced or widowed; our children have
own and are living their own lives.

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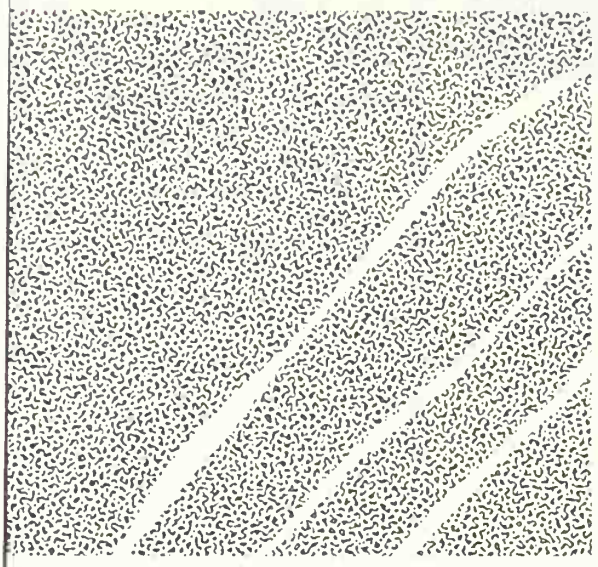

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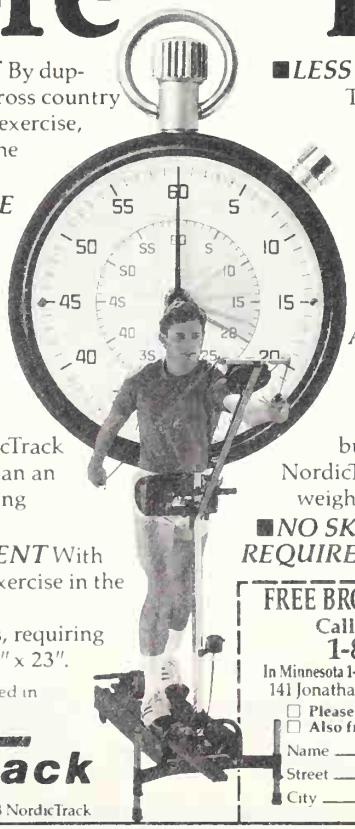

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Just to pay the rent? Just to stay alive
No good answers come to mind.

There have been nights when I'v
counted the pills to make sure the
would be enough; I still have m
cache and I keep it replenished. I ad
mire the Dutch, who allow a sub-ros
suicide policy: suicide is not legal, bu
it is neither investigated nor que
tioned when it happens. It is too ba
that our hypocritical society insis
that one must live as long as is med
cally possible. Choosing one's time o
death, once life seems to offer no fu
ther satisfaction or joy, is rational.

Anonymous

Would Edward Hoagland includ
exceeding the speed limit, practicin
unsafe sex, observing Lent, sufferin
from ring around the collar, or leavin
oneself open in backgammon withi
the taxonomy of suicide? For the lif
of me, I do not know what suicide is
but, tell me, should I leave a note?

Sarah Wright
Washington, D.C.

I am disappointed by Edward Hoag
land's treatment of suicide. How ca
he scoff at prayer while quoting fro
Corinthians? I am also offended by h
assertion that "a genuine love for th
living will stymie suicidal depression
not chemical in origin." Sometime
those who love most genuinely dem
onstrate that love by taking their ow
lives. Too often a lover's final act is
plea for recognition of that unrequit
ed love.

Hoagland fails to emphasize the fi
nality of suicide. To take one's ow
life is to *choose* to eliminate all othe
possibilities.

D.B. Burns
Chicago, Ill.

Edward Hoagland states tha
"when the number of choices peopl
have is increased, an entire range o
possibilities opens up." Indirectly, h
points out that freedom does not nec
essarily breed happiness. The Amish
neighbors of my childhood have on
of the lowest suicide rates of any group

in North America, yet their society is one of the most restrictive in the Western world. Furthermore, Sweden, one of the most egalitarian countries in the world, has one of the highest suicide rates. One can only wonder if such freedom is what men and women really want.

Dostoyevsky wrote that only a small minority of humanity can be content with absolute freedom; the rest of mankind desires and needs some form of guidance. Without some purpose, life itself is too meaningless and painful for many to endure. Living for the sake of living is not a good enough reason to wake up in the morning. I guess that's why I believe in God; without that belief I would have used my .22 long ago.

Graeme B. Gilbert
Kingston, Ontario

Israeli Index

Harper's Magazine's preoccupation with the shortcomings of Israel, exemplified in the Harper's Index, is more than annoying; it bears the ugly semblance of anti-Semitism. Rarely does the magazine comment on Arab countries when they are worthy of criticism: their refusal to accept Palestinian refugees, their lack of democratic processes, the barbarous position of women in these states.

Israel, a beleaguered country of four million people, is surrounded by sixty million Arab enemies, eager to destroy the tiny state. Does *Harper's Magazine* believe that the Arabs need its support?

Sylvia Day
Woodstock, N.Y.

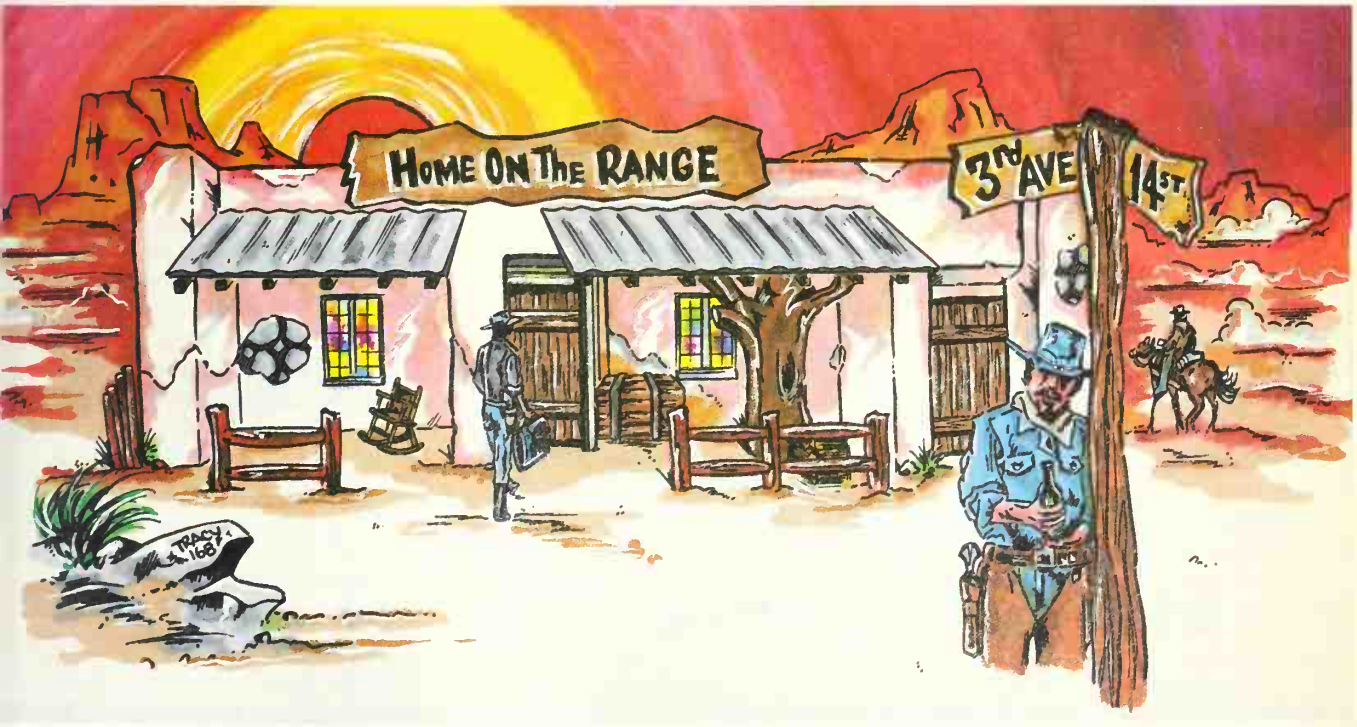
I was amazed to find no mention of Israel in the February Harper's Index. It made me curious: How many times has Israel been cited in a statistic on that page? Better yet—how many times *per capita*? I'm willing to bet my last shekel that no other foreign country comes close.

That Israel is extremely popular among journalists is demonstrated by the following statistics: Tel Aviv ranks third (after Washington and Moscow) in the absolute number of foreign reporters working there, and Israel ranks first in the number of foreign journalists per capita.

Oved Dahari
Owings Mills, Md.

Deer Hunters

Frederick Turner ["A Field Guide to the Synthetic Landscape," April] does not appreciate the difference between people killing deer, and wolves, coyotes, and mountain lions killing deer. A human hunter shoots deer that are healthy (indeed, that is usually what the hunter wants—a "healthy specimen," a "trophy"). A wolf, or even a pack of wolves, has little chance of bringing down a healthy adult deer. Natural predators prey on the weak, the old, and the sick. This kind of predation strengthens the



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gene pool and improves the herd.

Deer populations become artificially high due to human manipulation of habitat and destruction of their natural predators. (All this so that a small minority of citizens can have something to shoot at!) Left alone, deer populations would not have skyrocketed in the first place. If left alone now, they will naturally stabilize in a generation or two.

Paulette Callen
Nutley, N.J.

Is It Art?

In his critique "Through Gringo Eyes" [April], Edward W. Said asserts that there are only two ways to read Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo* and, by extension, all other Western works of fiction about non-Western cultures. Our choice, he says, is to read Conrad either "to confirm our habitual suspicions about Latin America" or to find in his prose evidence of our own skewed world.

Although these are important insights, the either/or approach is shortsighted. By positing it in this way, Said insists that *Nostromo* is merely a political novel. The politics are there, certainly, but they are not the novel's only subject. *Nostromo* should be read as a great work of literature that provides, in the largest sense, insight into human character and existence.

It is strange and sad that for Said *Nostromo* is primarily a political document and not a work of literature. Perhaps he would be as noteworthy a professor of English and comparative literature as he is a political commentator if he would acknowledge the existence of art above politics.

John Parry
Washington, D.C.

A New Story From Gordon Lish

The book-jacket copy Gordon Lish wrote for his new collection of stories [Readings, "But Enough About You," April] is the best fiction he will ever write.

Brad Armstrong
Aspen, Colo.

NOTEBOOK

The road to Shaaraim

By Lewis H. Lapham

He who makes a beast of himself gets rid of the pain of being a man.

—Dr. Johnson

The news from Israel this spring is about a rain of stones, and as I read the reports about the suppression of the rioting in Nablus and Gaza, I sometimes wonder how the story would be told in the American press if Israel were a less-favored state. Suppose that a popular uprising were taking place in Panama or the Philippines or Northern Ireland. Suppose that General Noriega's troops were killing sixteen-year-old boys at the rate of one or two a day, or that Corazon Aquino's army were blowing up houses and imposing the rule of an iron fist, or that Margaret Thatcher, borrowing a phrase from Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, told a crowd of cheering Englishmen on Christmas Eve that the Irish rebels must be crushed "like grasshoppers" and their heads smashed against the walls of Westminster Abbey.

It doesn't need much effort to imagine the outbursts of editorial indignation, and the congressional fact-finding commissions leaving every Wednesday and Friday for the scenes of international crime. If, God forbid, any of the events in question were to take place in a socialist country, I assume that the best conservative opinion (i.e., precisely some of the very same people who so furiously promote the cause of Israel) would demand ultimatums and a show of gunboats. On *Nightline* most of the guests would be wearing uniforms.

The Palestinian uprising at least has had the salutary effect of making Israel more visible through the mists of wish and dream. As long as Israel could win its wars in the desert, the Israeli army could be seen as a company of heroes lately arrived from Camelot or Troy. The presumption of military grace gained wide currency in the United States during the years of its confusion and defeat in Vietnam. Fighting a war that they could neither win nor justify, the Americans envied the Israelis their freedom of maneuver in the tactical as well as the moral theaters of operation. But unless wars can be fought in the military equivalent of a football stadium (in the Sinai, say, or the Falkland Islands), they presuppose the random and indiscriminate killing of civilians. The Israeli army lost the aura of romance when, in the summer of 1982, its invasion of Lebanon ended with the killings at Sabra and Shatila.

Now that Israel has to fight its wars in town, under conditions likely to be imposed by any prolonged war in the late twentieth century, Israel has become a state like any other state, forced into complicity with the acts of barbarism. Attempting the hopeless task of conquering a peace, the Israeli army makes itself an accomplice to the murder of children.

The photographs in every morning's paper give to the Palestinian nemesis the sorrow of a human face. The Arab terrorist becomes the massacred innocent, and the Israeli soldier, once thought to be the paragon of chivalry, the cossack. The exchange of images poses questions that even as recently as six months ago would have been thought rude or anti-Semitic. Let too many corpses be seen on too many broken streets (149 Palestinians reported dead as of late April), and in another six months it might be possible to talk about Israel not as sacred mystery but as secular geography. I can imagine a fair number of well-meaning people, Jews as well as Christians, questioning the terms of the American alliance with Israel. What do we owe, and what do we expect in return for a subsidy of $3 billion a year?

As between the Israelis and the Palestinians, in which diaspora is justice to be found, and does the argument take place in the realm of existential absolutes (civilization and democracy pitted against chaos and pagan superstition), or is it a quarrel about real estate—the colonial settlers haggling with the native tribes about the ownership of the almond trees? Is the alliance with the United States founded on the reasons of state or the pangs of conscience? If the former, then how does it come to pass that Israel feels no compunction about ordering political assassinations or setting loose its spies in the corridors of the Pentagon? Why did Israel encourage the American sale of weapons to Iran, and from where, and for what purpose, did it acquire its nuclear arsenal? Against what enemy, and in what grandiose imperial design, does the United States seek to enlist the Israeli host?

If the alliance rests on compassion, does the terrible suffering visited upon the Jewish people by Nazi Germany invest them with the rights of the martyred and grant them a kind of moral *droit du seigneur*? If so, how long does the license last? Indefinitely? For forty years? Until the Holocaust has become a parable and all the Palestinians have been deported or lost at sea? Throughout the twelfth century, the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem exult-

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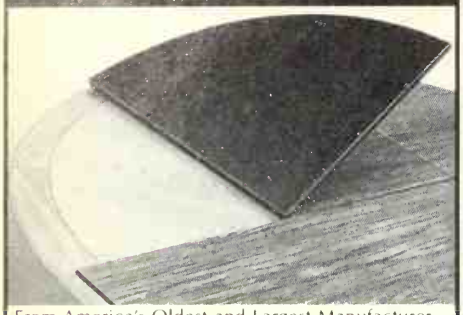

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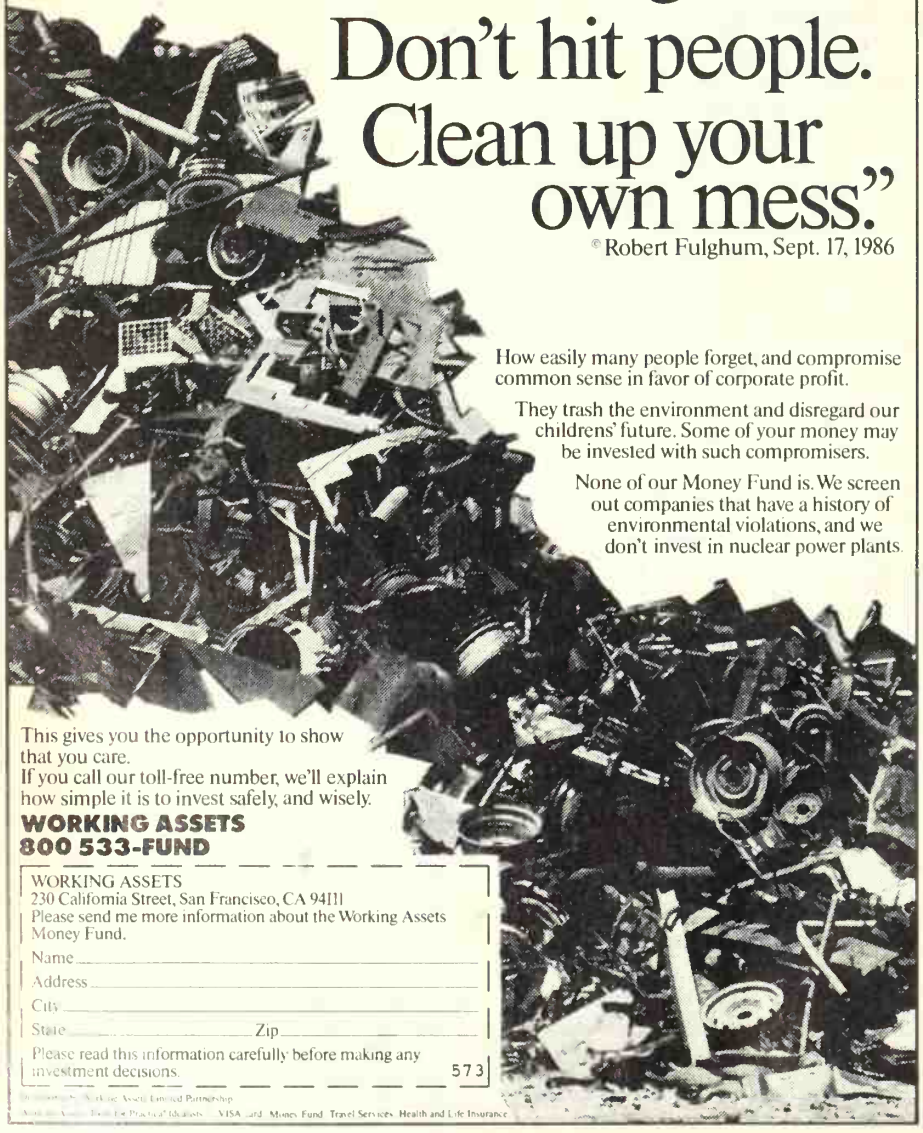

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ed in its dominion over precisely th same landscape now known as Israel Paid for with money extorted from th faithful in western Christendom, bap tized in the name of a holy cause, gov erned by Norman knights as pitiless a the Stern Gang, the Kingdom of Jeru salem preserved its realm of make believe for almost a hundred years.

Turn the questions the other way, and ask whether the United States wishes to exploit Israel's military ambition or protect its conscience. Do we ally ourselves with David or Goliath? On the latter question, opinion within Israel divides more fiercely than it does in the United States. The Israeli writers and politicians in what is now an eloquent minority argue that the iron masks of power ill-become a country whose founders conceived of it as a "light unto the nations." In 1948 the most devout of the Jewish surveyors in the Promised Land regarded even the suggestion of a nation-state as blasphemy. Defining the strength of Israel as the strength of a transcendent idea, they thought that the power of David resided not in the weight of his stone but the luminousness of his spirit.

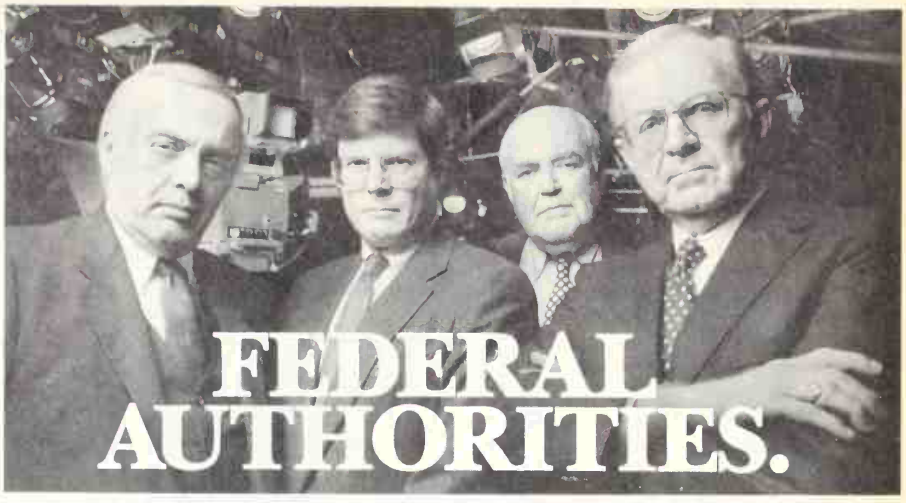
The Israeli heirs to this belief advised against holding the captured Arab territories after the 1967 war—not because of the harm that would befall the Palestinians but because of the corruption that would likely subvert the Jews. David Ben-Gurion insisted that all the occupied lands be given back, as quickly as possible, before the attitudes of mind habitual to prison guards could "distort, and [maybe] ultimately destroy, the Jewish state." The current members of what might be called the party of David (among them the writers Amos Oz and Amos Elon and former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban) argue that the occupation already has become untenable, that time and demography favor the Palestinians, and that sooner or later the Kingdom of Jerusalem falls (as it did in 1187) and Saladin stables his horse in the tabernacle.

Writing in the *New York Times* this February, in support of the peace initiative put forward by Secretary of State George Shultz, Eban said: "The fact that Israeli military rule is rejected by the Palestinians does not mean

that it is tolerable for Israel." He went on to ask whether a "nation-state can really exist in any degree of coherence and harmony if it exercises permanent rule over a foreign population that does not enjoy even the pretense of equal rights and that is not linked to Israel by any flag, tongue, faith, historic experience, national sentiment or common allegiance."

Eban's point seems to me irrefutable, but probably that is because I don't know what it means to live in Israel in the midst of resentful Arabs, some of whom might have killed my daughter or maimed my son. Certainly the Shamir government looks as contemptuously on parleys with the infidel as did Godfrey of Bouillon, Defender of the Holy Sepulcher. It places its trust in the force of arms and so must resort to tear gas and the vocabulary of a police state. As in South Africa or Algeria before the civil war, the subject peoples forfeit their definition as human beings. Menachem Begin in the late 1970s described the Palestinians as "two-legged beasts of prey thirsting for Jewish blood." His successor, Shamir, reduces them to the stature of insects. The children born within the walls of the Israeli garrison inherit the gifts of hatred and anger. They learn to tell the necessary lies, to one another as well as to foreign television crews, and they learn to see not with the eyes of the soul but with the propagandist's floodlights.

Just as it's hard to know why so many prominent Americans tacitly approve Shamir's impersonation of Goliath, so also it's hard to know why so many well-informed Israelis accept American assurances of good faith. Surely everybody knows by now that the story of Goliath ends unhappily for the Philistines—their camp plundered, the road to Shaaraim strewn with the bodies of the slain, and their champion from Gath dead on the ground under bronze-plated armor weighing 5,000 shekels. The Americans left armament of commensurate value on the roads to Da Nang and Hue, and one might have thought that the Washington geo-politicians might have learned, after twenty years in the Asian wilderness, the old lesson that an army can defeat another army but not a people.



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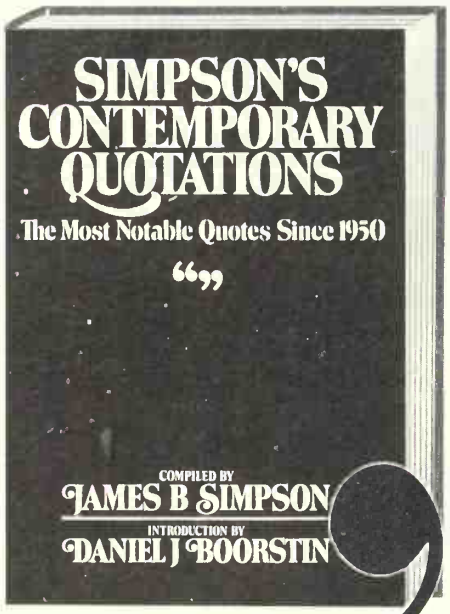

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Category: Place

I am the only christian nation in my continent

A small sea is named after me

I was a colony of Spain for 300 years

The archbishop for many years of my largest city was named Cardinal Sin

I am composed of over 7,100 parts

My new government leader is relatively clueless

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ANSWERS TO SAMPLES REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES STARTER

Category: Thing

I range from full to empty

I keep things together

I can stretch out wide but usually remain folded

It's a pressing job

I bend bent metal

Without paper I would be an antique

Leslie Earl
New York, NY

Apparently not. Despite his hope of peace, Secretary Shultz assures everybody in Jerusalem that he will do nothing to interfere with the supplies of American weapons. By and large the American media borrow the definitions of the Israeli government and refer to the riots in Bethlehem as a cynical strategy in a long-standing war rather than as a popular uprising born of desperation and genuine national feeling. The presidential candidates say as little as possible about the riots, and Henry Kissinger advises the friends of Israel to blind the television cameras in the occupied territories and suppress the rioters as "rapidly" and as "brutally" as circumstances permit. He suggests, as always, that the fault can be found not in the deed but in the image, not in the policy but in how the policy looks in print and on film. If only the Israelis could portray Goliath as a victim, maybe the Palestinians would feel sorry for the fellow and agree to go to Mecca.

Were I an Israeli politician, I think I would be wary of American promises. The record of our dealings with client states, particularly those client states in which we discover the military virtues, does not inspire confidence. We feel drawn to dictators who we think might stand between us and the fear of our own impotence, who might hold back, if only for twenty minutes, the darkness of the Third World. For a few years we pretend that our ally is democracy's best friend in one or another of the poorer latitudes, and for however long American public opinion (notoriously fickle) remains convinced of its moral beauty, we send F-16s and messages of humanitarian concern. But then something goes wrong with the slogans or the band music. The despot's troops don't know how to fire the machine guns, or the prime minister's brother annexes the traffic in cocaine. For one reason or another we decide we can't afford to sponsor any more parades, and we leave by helicopter from the roof of the embassy. By aligning Israel with the American dream of cut-rate empire, Shamir casts his lot with Diem, Somoza, Thieu, Marcos, Noriega, and the Shah of Shahs. It is a line of sterile and ignoble succession. ■

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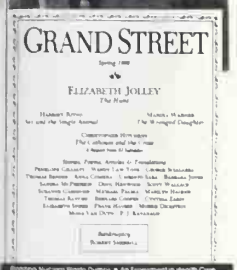

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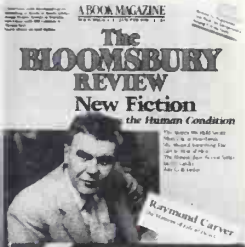

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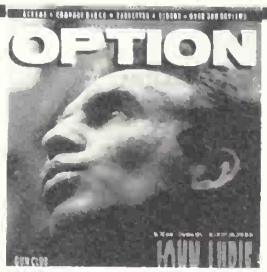

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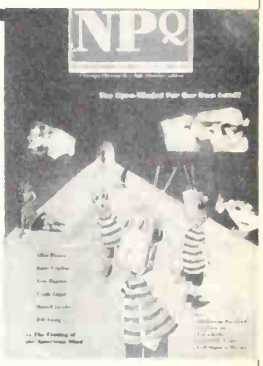

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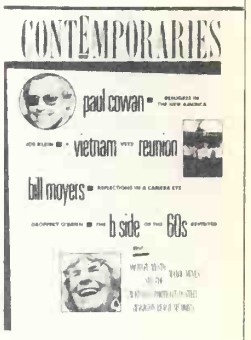

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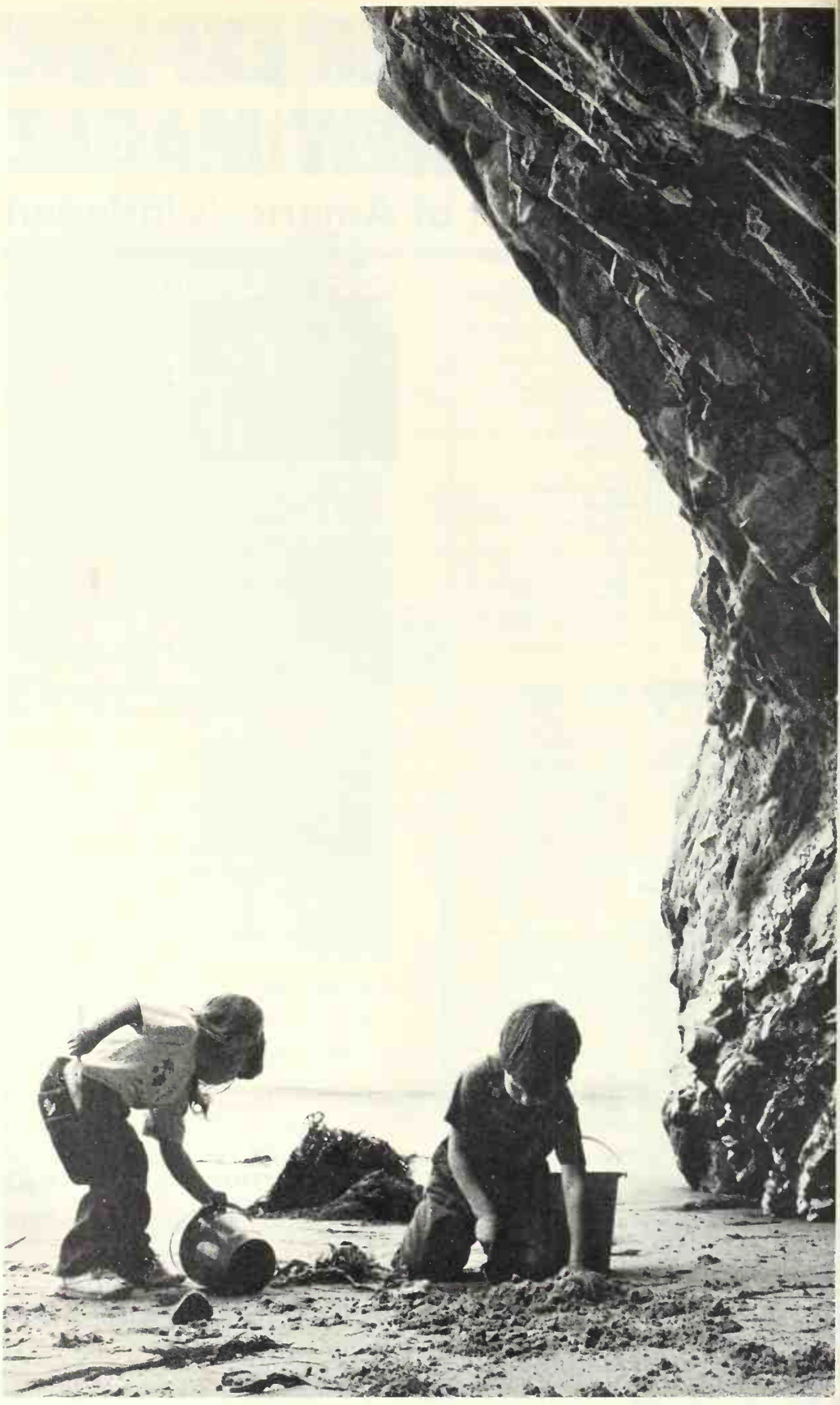

IF YOU LOOK HARD ENOUGH, YOU'LL BE SURPRISED WHAT YOU MIGHT FIND.

HARPER'S INDEX

Portion of the defense budget it would take to lift every American family over the poverty line for one year : 1/9
Percentage of Americans who say that military expenditures are hurting the nation's economy : 62
Percentage who say that the United States should maintain its military strength no matter what it costs : 67
Portion of America's 575,607 bridges that are structurally deficient, obsolete, or closed : 2/5
Percentage of American ammunition storage sites in Europe that lack a working alarm system : 78
Portion of the Pentagon's 1986 budget for weapons and R&D that was classified : 1/7
Portion of the 1989 budget that is classified : 1/5
Estimated value of the arms the Reagan administration has shipped to Afghan rebels since January : $500,000,000
Estimated number of mules it has shipped to Afghan rebels since last September : 700
Ratio of unexploded grenades, artillery shells, and land mines to sheep in the Falkland Islands : 1:4
To people : 89:1
Percentage of British citizens who say that Northern Ireland should remain part of the United Kingdom : 27
Percentage of political deaths in Northern Ireland, since 1969, that have been caused by the IRA : 40
Percentage of all those killed or injured in terrorist bombings worldwide last year who were Pakistani : 45
Number of the 26 journalists murdered last year who were killed in the Philippines : 11
Acres of wilderness Bolivia will preserve in exchange for a $650,000 reduction in its foreign debt : 3,000,000
Chances that a pharmaceutical is derived from a plant : 1 in 4
Chances that an American surgeon will be sued for malpractice this year : 1 in 6
Percentage of all sitting federal judges who were appointed by Ronald Reagan : 47
Number of presidential elections since 1964 in which the Democratic candidate won a majority of the white vote : 0
Average increase in an NBA team's season attendance when a black player is replaced by a comparable white : 10,000
Percentage of black college students who belong to a fraternity or sorority : 20
Percentage of white college students who do : 6
Number of universities that have a Barbra Streisand Professor of Women and Men in Society : 1
Percentage of students at Dunkin' Donuts University who do not pass the six-week training course : 5
Estimated number of American children who are currently schooled at home : 250,000
Estimated number of base-sliding injuries that occur in softball games each year : 1,700,000
Rounds of golf played in America each year : 400,000,000
Percentage of all ties sold last year that were bought for Father's Day : 17
Number of clothes vending machines in Paris : 9
Number of deaths in America, since 1981, caused by vending machines having fallen on people who shook them : 8
Percentage of American coffee drinkers who consume at least 10 cups a day : 27
Percentage of Americans who say they suffer heartburn at least once a month : 44
Number of years it takes the average American car to produce its own weight in carbon : 1
Percentage of dogs that are overweight : 40
Price of *Video Dog,* a tape offering the "experience of owning a pet without the mess and inconvenience" : $19.95
Price of *Video Baby* : $19.95
Estimated number of pornographic videocassettes that are rented each week : 3,400,000
Chances that an American adult will report having had a "great" night last night : 1 in 7
Rank of "night," "girl," and "street" among the nouns most often used in Bruce Springsteen's songs : 1,2,3

Figures cited are the latest available as of April 1988. Sources are listed on page 76.
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READINGS

[Memorandum]

KISSINGER BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

From a confidential memorandum written by Julius Berman, the former chair of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and sent to a group of friends. The memo describes a breakfast meeting American Jewish leaders held with Henry Kissinger on January 31 to discuss the Palestinian uprising; its contents were disclosed in the press in March. Kissinger reacted angrily to the leaking of the memo, but did not dispute its accuracy.

Dear Friend:

I attended a private "off the record" breakfast meeting with Henry Kissinger early this week to discuss the current situation in the Mideast and I believe you will find of interest the following report on the discussion that took place.

Dr. Kissinger conveyed three major points, as follows:

1. *Now* is *not* the time for Jewish community leaders to publicly attack Israel or its policies with respect to the Palestinians;

2. Israel should bar the media from entry into the territories involved in the present demonstrations, accept the short-term criticism of the world press for such conduct, and put down the insurrection as quickly as possible—overwhelmingly, brutally, and rapidly;

3. The proposed international peace conference, as presently conceived by Foreign Minister Peres, may lead to a "disaster" for Israel.

I will now elucidate Dr. Kissinger's development of these points.

He started out by making it clear that he wants to be perceived by the public as an American leader and not as a representative of the Jewish community, but that we should realize that he would never participate in anything that would negatively affect the security of Israel, especially in light of what had happened to his own family during the Holocaust.

. . . The real tragedy facing Israel is obvious: it cannot give up all of the territories and end up like Czechoslovakia at the beginning of World War II; yet it cannot maintain dominion over all of the Arabs in the territories.

Focusing on the situation in the last few weeks in Israel, Kissinger appropriately noted that Israel's public relations were horrible. In his opinion Israel made two major mistakes. First, it did not throw all of the media out of the relevant territories. Second, it announced that it would "beat" the participants (and not shoot them). Israel may have felt that that approach was more humane, but it overlooked the fact that when you "beat" someone it means you already have control of that person and can no longer claim self-defense.

Kissinger repeatedly emphasized that under no circumstances should Israel make any concessions during the present insurrection. If one

learns anything from the history of revolutions, it is that concessions during an insurrection merely accelerate the revolution rather than hasten its end. Therefore, what is critical at this time is to put down the insurrection as quickly as possible. It was at that point that Kissinger added that he "really thinks that Jewish leaders should not yell at Israel now and make [Israelis] even more paranoic." We must close ranks and not let the enemy utilize quotations from Jewish leaders as evidence to support [his] position.

Kissinger then turned to the international peace conference which has been proposed by Foreign Minister Peres. He said that he was fully apprised of all the procedural conditions that Peres has placed on the conference and the respective roles of the parties involved, but he still feels that Peres overlooked one major problem. What is going to happen during the second week of the conference? All the deals that Peres has made with the various prospective participants in the conference reflect, in his opinion, naïveté and are a bit childish. After all is said and done, Israel does not have a government at present that could formulate a substantive policy for the proposed conference and, on the other side of the coin, there is no Arab leader that is able to make peace right now. Israel must always be aware of the fact that the American government is not against Israel's return to the 1967 borders (except for, possibly, Jerusalem) . . .

Kissinger recently had a conversation with Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy, in which [Murphy] explained to him in excruciating detail all the procedural protections for the beginning of the conference. He noted, however, that no one was focusing on what happens in the course of the conference itself. He feels that if the United States and Israel do not have a prearranged agreement as to what positions will be taken at the conference, it may lead to a disaster. For example, assuming that after the opening there will be subcommittees for bilateral negotiations, there is no question that they will come to an immediate deadlock. After all, can King Hussein really agree to give up any territory to Israel? What happens then? According to the Peres formula, Israel will have the right to say that nobody could talk from that point on. That simply cannot be done. For that matter, the idea of Israel just walking out of the conference is ridiculous.

Kissinger noted that, other than Israel, there is no state attending the conference that does not favor Israel's return to the 1967 borders and, in his opinion, Israel could not survive that type of withdrawal.

In general, Kissinger feels that the issue of a peace treaty is overblown. It is not the be-all and end-all of peace in the Mideast. Mutual recognition did not stop Iran and Iraq from their war, nor has it stopped India and Pakistan from continuing to fight with each other.

Focusing on the conference itself, Kissinger said that there is no question in his mind that China will adamantly support an extreme Arab position. This is necessary to outdo the Russians' romancing of the Arabs. Syria, in his opinion, must also take a radical position on the Palestinian claim, so that it will not end up being isolated on the Golan Heights issue. Israel, on the other hand, can never give up the Golan . . .

Returning to the current situation in Israel, he repeated his prior point that the insurrection must be quelled immediately, and the first step should be to throw out television, à la South Africa. To be sure, there will be international criticism of this step, but that will dissipate in short order. As he put it, "There are no awards for losing with moderation."

He feels that international guarantees [of new borders after a settlement] are not worth a damn. They can only be used to stop Israel from appropriately defending itself from terrorist activities; they are no help against guerrilla infiltration.

In terms of an ultimate solution, Kissinger feels that Israel should negotiate with America and work out a unified position, if at all possible, and then unilaterally announce that it is prepared to transfer control of Gaza to Jordan—not Egypt; he does not want Egyptian troops on Israel's borders. Moreover, he feels that Egypt would allow the PLO to take over Gaza, and he is confident that King Hussein of Jordan would never allow the PLO to take similar control.

As noted above, he does not believe that Israel should retain *all* the territory that it took in the 1967 war. Consequently, at the same time Israel is making its unilateral announcement on Gaza, Israel should announce the specific territories within Judaea or Samaria that it is willing to relinquish, provided that no military forces be situated there and that there be no PLO-controlled government in that area.

The announcement would then conclude with an offer to have an international conference convened for the purpose of implementing the proposal.

In the give-and-take of the subsequent discussion at the meeting, it became clear that Kissinger is not confident such a unilateral declaration would get very far, and of course, one of the fears that immediately comes to mind is that such a declaration would be interpreted as the *initial* position of Israel and subject to negotiation at the conference itself.

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I'M NOT SURE WHO IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE, EITHER, BUT I'M PRETTY SURE WE CAN NARROW IT DOWN TO THE REAGAN ERA....
STATESMAN
VISIONARY
FELON
BEN SARGENT

From the Austin American-Statesman.

[Interview]

THE IMPRINT OF SOLIDARITY

From "Towards a Civil Society: Hopes for Polish Democracy," an interview with Adam Michnik in the February 19–25 issue of the London Times Literary Supplement. *Michnik, a historian and Solidarity theorist, has been imprisoned several times since martial law was declared in December 1981. The interview was conducted in Gdańsk by Erica Blair.*

The level of publicly expressed confidence and dignity in Poland seems much higher than in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Is my impression correct? Or has this social confidence been slowly whittled away since the events of 1980–81? Are Poles in danger of feeling defeated?

The changes you observe are absolutely irreversible. The 1980–81 events were a revolution for dignity, a celebration of the rights of the vertebrae, a permanent victory for the straightened spine. Whatever happens, one fact cannot be erased from twentieth-century history: the downfall of the totalitarian communist order began here in Poland. I am convinced that while the events of 1917 signaled the rise of the communist system, the meeting at the Gdańsk shipyards in August 1980 began its destruction. Six years after the Hungarian revolution there was no trace of the revolution. And six years after the invasion of Czechoslovakia there was no trace of the Prague Spring. But six years after the declaration of martial law in this country Solidarity exists along with a civil society. There is an underground press, an underground culture, underground science, as well as other underground structures. The people are relaxed, unafraid, and their backs are straight. We have educated our communists, and this is the greatest achievement of Solidarity. But this is now history, and we need to talk about the future.

In the West it is frequently noted that Solidarity is no longer a serious threat to General Wojciech Jaruzelski. The end of the large street demonstrations is cited as supporting evidence for this view. Is Solidarity being forced on the defensive?

If we consider Solidarity as a mass movement—of 10 million people—as it was in the days before martial law, then, of course, it is weaker today. Movements involving millions of people are normally active only in revolutionary moments. Solidarity is no exception, and in this sense it has come to resemble Western social movements. But I don't accept the idea that Solidarity is no longer a problem for General

Jaruzelski. If this is the case, why doesn't he permit Solidarity to operate normally?

But there are fewer demonstrations. Why is Solidarity's struggle against the state much less visible?

One reason is that Poles are tired of demonstrations and struggles that only lead to confrontations with the government, and thus reduce the chances of concessions. Poles cannot win a war against the Soviet Union with stones and their bare hands. But there is another reason. The worst thing we could do today would be to take actions that block the changes under way in the Soviet Union. There is a nineteenth-century precedent for this: In 1863 the January uprising in Poland blocked the reforms of Alexander II in Russia, thus allowing the soul of Russia to pass from Aleksandr Herzen to the archpriest and prophet of nationalism, Mikhail Katkov. In 1956 the Khrushchev reforms were also blocked by the Hungarian revolution. Current developments in the Soviet Union offer the real possibility of change for the better throughout the communist bloc. Since we have helped stimulate these changes, and since their deepening is impossible without Solidarity, we do not want to frustrate them.

Solidarity has two methods of fighting the totalitarian state. It can rely on strikes and demonstrations, and it can turn its back on this state by confronting it—as Maciej Poleski says—with the silence of the sea. A society which remains silent seems easy to control. In fact, it is very difficult to rule, precisely because it is insensitive to the impulses of the state. Lech Wałęsa likes to ask, "What is the difference between fish in an aquarium and fish soup?" His answer: "The fish in the aquarium can be converted into fish soup, whereas the fish soup cannot be converted back into aquarium fish." This subtle joke summarizes Jaruzelski's problem today. As long as he refuses to recognize Solidarity, he is forced to accept a society that resembles fish soup. But if he wants society to resemble an aquarium of live fish, as he must if his economic reforms are to succeed, then he must recognize that it is Solidarity that gives real life to our society. Without Solidarity, Jaruzelski's hands are tied, even though Solidarity is unable to call a general strike at a day's notice.

This is the secret of the Polish situation. For six years Jaruzelski has been paralyzed by his insistence that Solidarity does not exist. His actions against Solidarity resemble the attempt of Xerxes to defeat the sea by doing battle with it. Jaruzelski is faced with a painful choice: Either he can be realistic and acknowledge the crucial importance of Solidarity's role in society, or he can believe, as Marxist-Leninists sometimes do, in the miracle of Solidarity's disappearance.

[Polemic]

GLASNOST CHIC

From "Glasnost and Opportunism," by Sasha Bogdanov, in Glasnost, *No. 8, a journal published in Moscow. Glasnost is reprinted in English by the Center for Democracy in the USSR, located in New York City. Sasha Bogdanov, a political activist, lives in Leningrad. Translated by Galina Dvortsova.*

And so *glasnost* came to reign in the land. The official press offers a multicolored array of ideological paradoxes, every one of which was until recently punishable by a few years of imprisonment. The enforcement of RSFSR Criminal Code Articles 70 (anti-Soviet propaganda) and 190 (a whole bunch of pretexts for dwelling on the same subject in court) has been suspended—but not abolished.

We already show off political jokes at social gatherings, although simultaneously we check ourselves: God forbid that a joke on something current should turn up. Nothing about current issues, please. The situation is complex—what if we frighten off the bird of happiness of *glasnost* and *perestroika*? We would once again spend the rest of our lives with our suitcases packed, gathering moss. Isn't it better to have at least the kind of *glasnost* we've got now—one that is handed down from above and adapted to local conditions? No, it's not better. It turns out to be a halfway *glasnost*, an opportunistic one. Fashionable, like this season's chic little boots.

For what if tomorrow they hand down non-*glasnost* from above? What if they fill the counters with Stalinist field jackets instead of jeans, and start hyping the style of the austere champions of Leninist ideas? Then what? So far *glasnost* is being treated like Cinderella. The same people who used to guard non-*glasnost* as the apple of their eye are now promoting *glasnost*, demonstrating the marvels of cosmetic reeducation. And at the same time they continue to slander people who, risking their lives, nurtured the child born before its time.

Is there any logic in this development of events? Unfortunately, there is. *Glasnost* is a living and quite domestic creature. It not only barks at evil and evildoers but also serves to protect the existing and not the imaginary order—with the right leash, collar, and food, of course. *Glasnost* can cure and it can kill. It can overthrow a monarchy, but it can also perpetuate the reign of a bureaucracy.

They say heavenly times are near. But that's what they used to say, even more beautifully and more convincingly. And the more peppily they talked about it, the more monstrously in-

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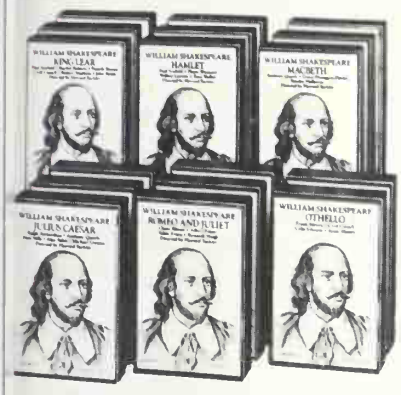

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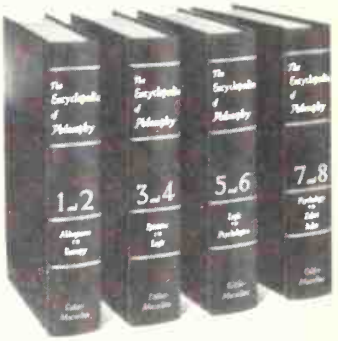

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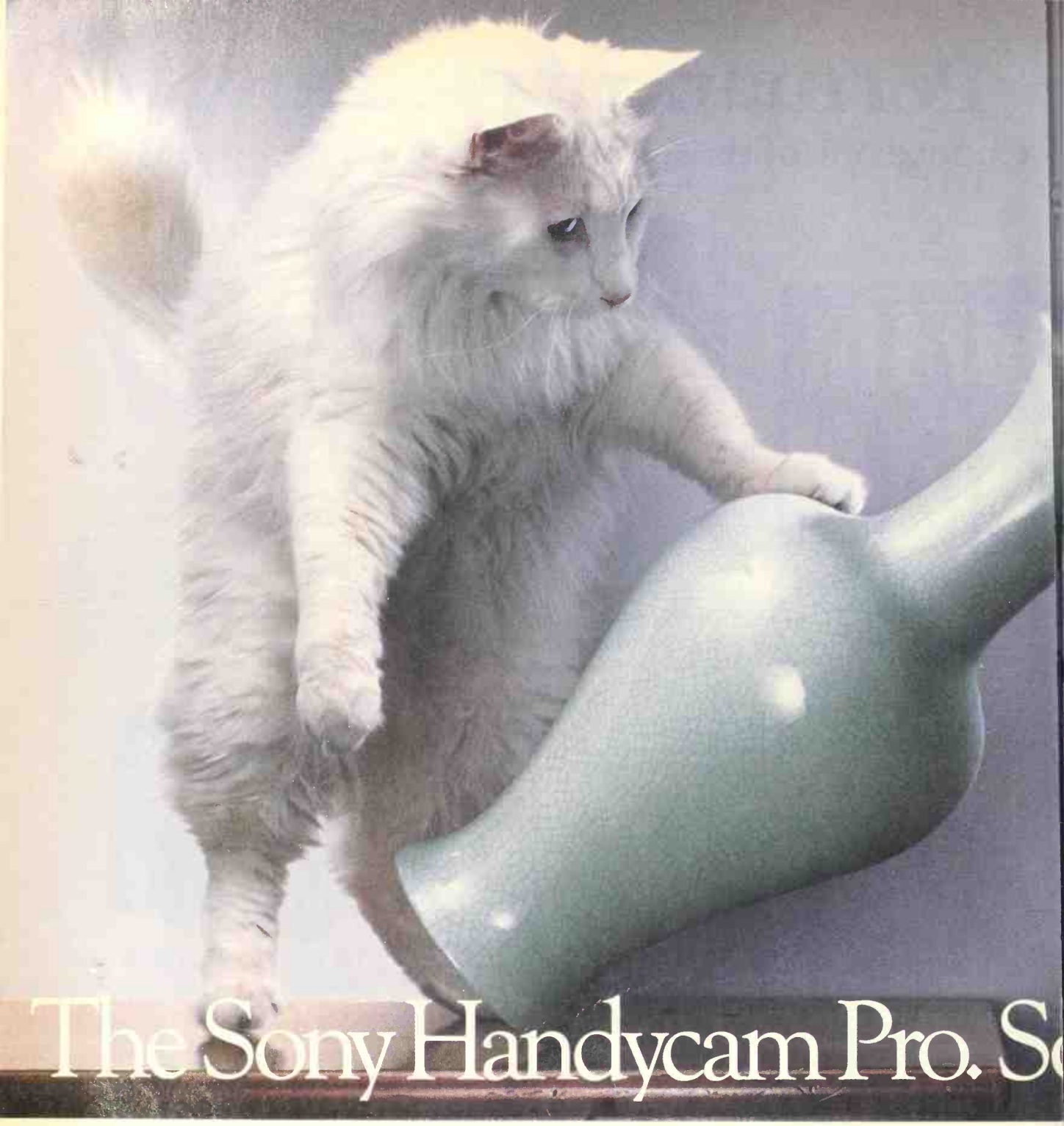

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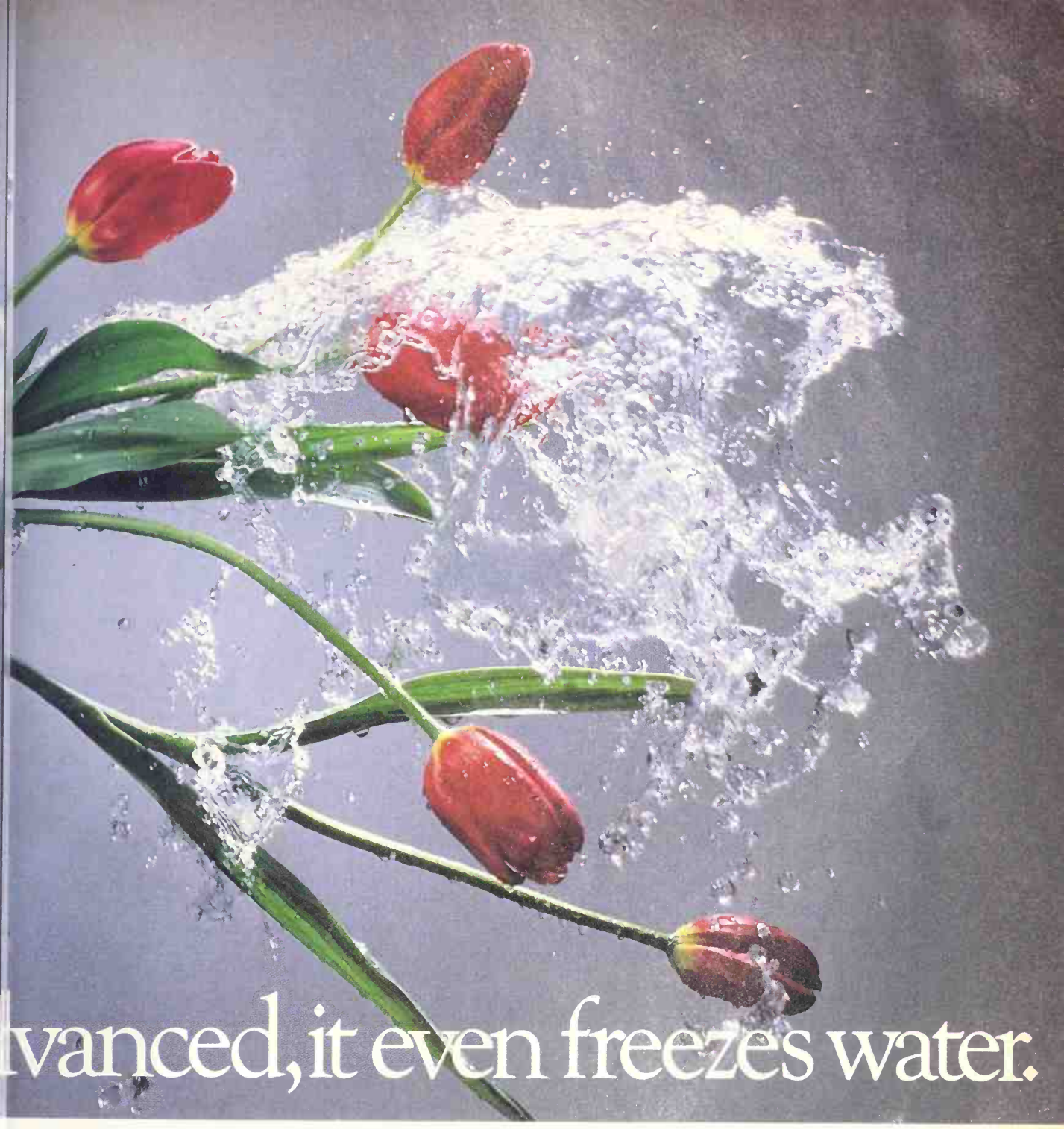

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[Map]

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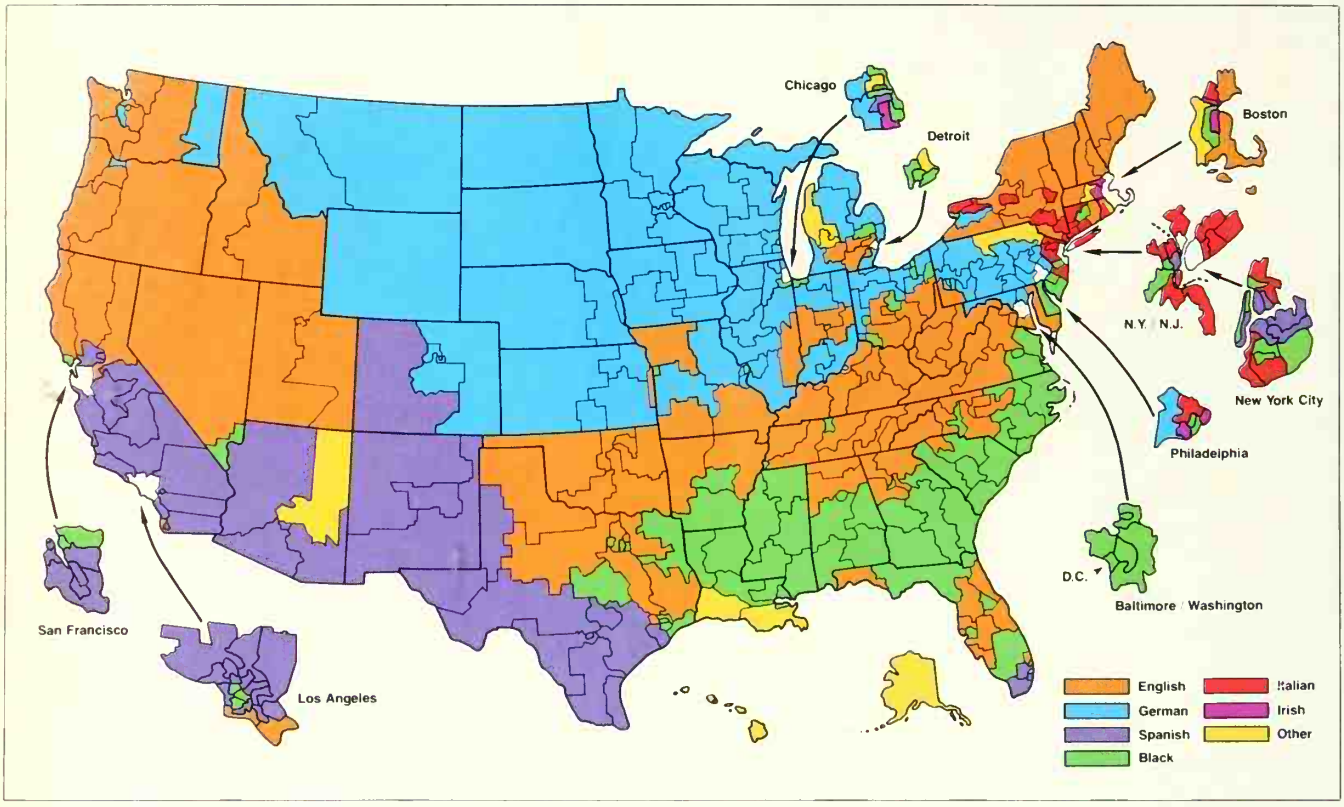

From The American Chartbook, *a forthcoming collection of maps by Rodger Doyle. This map, based on 1980 census data, shows the largest ancestry group in each congressional district.*

justice triumphed. This girl named "Glasnost" is still a stepdaughter, and those who are the quickest are trying on her glass slipper. And many, too many, people who once rescued the little girl during searches and arrests are still in places where doomsday horrors and torments would look merciful. Our minds do not penetrate into those vast black holes. And we're in no hurry to liberate all those who vanished there without a trace. We're doing well already. As for the others, it's their problem if they could not size up the situation at the right time.

Our media, with all their openness and integrity, are quick and eager to expose anything you can think of. So how come they are silent about the fact that the merit and praise for the miraculous survival of that little girl should go not to them but to some brutalized convicts excommunicated from the newspapers, magazines, radio, and television? Instead, they show us certificates from legal and medical experts stating that the girl named Glasnost was born two years ago. The experts say she is in wonderful health and eating well, and if anything happens, the child's parents—upright, worthy, and, moreover, ideologically correct comrades—will take care of her.

Our descendants will yet pass judgment on the halfheartedness of our convictions, on the degree of our responsibility for the fact that an ideal for which some people have landed in jails and labor camps has been turned before our eyes into a circus and a vanity fair. Is this really what our fathers, grandfathers, and forefathers dreamed of? No, absolutely not. But then, this looks so much more attractive . . . Almighty Opportunism! Your Majesty, the country is served!

Such progress! And there are scores of people willing to join! They bet on *glasnost* the way people bet on racehorses, hoping for luck. The issue of compromise is not even a subject of discussion. Yet no matter where you look these days, compromise is in vogue. *Glasnost* is being used purposefully to suppress the voices of those who do not and will not compromise—*that's* the issue. And our liberal intelligentsia, with its impeccable sensitivity to everything new, doesn't mind. Man has not survived by being

the strongest but by being the most adaptable. So let's adapt.

But no matter which way you look at it, adapting to the ways of opportunists is not reform. And sending our fair maiden Glasnost to the opportunists for re-education is certainly not the same as freedom of speech and the press.

And one more thing. My dear comrades, the ones waiting in line to try on Cinderella's slipper! Why waste time waiting when you have no basic respect for the individual and his rights? Hard as you may try, the slipper won't fit on Stalin's big callused foot. Whether you want to or not, you have to choose—once and for all—between the dictator's boot and the glass slipper of democracy. There is no other alternative, except for gangrene and amputation—not even in these confusing times of ideally restructured opportunism. You still don't believe me, do you? Well, just wait and see.

[Trial Exhibit]

TOBACCO'S SMOKING GUN?

From a Tobacco Institute memorandum introduced as evidence in Federal District Court in February in the case of Cipollone *v.* Liggett Group et al. *Antonio Cipollone is suing three cigarette companies for negligence in the death of his wife, Rose, a heavy smoker. The confidential document, written in 1972 and released under court order, was introduced by the plaintiff to show that tobacco companies and their trade association, the Tobacco Institute, deliberately misled the public about the health hazards of smoking. The memo was written by Frederick R. Panzer, a vice president of the Tobacco Institute at the time, and sent to the Institute's president, Horace R. Kornegay.*

TO: Horace R. Kornegay
FROM: Fred Panzer

GENERAL COMMENTS

It is my strong belief that we now have an opportunity to take the initiative in the cigarette controversy, and start to turn it around.

For nearly twenty years, this industry has employed a single strategy to defend itself on three major fronts: litigation, politics, and public opinion.

While the strategy was brilliantly conceived and executed over the years, helping us win important battles, it is only fair to say that it is not—nor was it intended to be—a vehicle for victory. On the contrary, it has always been a holding strategy, consisting of

—creating doubt about the health charge without actually denying it

—advocating the public's right to smoke without actually urging them to take up the practice

—encouraging objective scientific research as the only way to resolve the question of health hazard.

On the litigation front, for which the strategy was designed, it has been successful. . . .

On the political front, the strategy has helped make possible an orderly retreat. But it is fair to say that it has not stemmed the pressure for new legislation, despite the major concessions we have made.

THE STRATEGIC IMPASSE

As an industry, therefore, we are committed to an ill-defined middle ground which is articulated by variations on the theme that "the case is not proved." As the recent history of U.S. involvement in Vietnam demonstrated, it is impossible to hold the public on a middle course for any length of time. There seems to be no way that public opinion can engage in a controversy and choose an answer that goes beyond the range of either/or.

In the cigarette controversy, the public—especially those who are present and potential supporters (e.g., tobacco-state congressmen and heavy smokers)—must perceive, understand, and believe in evidence to sustain their opinions that smoking may not be the causal factor.

As things stand, we supply them with too little in the way of ready-made credible alternatives.

[Testimonial]

THE BANKER'S FRIEND

From a print- and TV-advertising campaign for University Savings Association, featuring John Connally. The former Texas governor recently declared bankruptcy. He has debts of more than $45 million, most of which is owed to banks.

John Connally on the importance of savings: "Nellie and I worked hard all our lives to make sure that our future would be financially secure. Well, the future is here, and things haven't quite worked out like we'd planned. But that's all right because there's no better place than Texas to start over and to save a little something. Because you never know what the future might bring."

THE ALTERNATIVES

Two such credible alternatives exist:

1. *The Constitutional Hypothesis:* i.e., people who smoke tend to differ importantly from people who do not—in their heredity, in constitutional makeup, in patterns of life, and in the pressure under which they live.

2. *The Multi-factorial Hypothesis:* i.e., as science advances, more and more factors come under suspicion as contributing to the illnesses for which smoking is blamed—air pollution, viruses, food additives, occupational hazards, and stress.

Our 1970 public-opinion survey showed that a majority of people (52 percent) believed that cigarettes are *only one of the many causes* of smokers having more illnesses [*sic*]. It also showed that half of the people who believed that smokers have more illness than non-smokers accepted the constitutional hypothesis as the explanation.

Thus, there are millions of people who would be receptive to a new message, stating: Cigarette smoking may not be the health hazard that the anti-smoking people say it is *because other alternatives are at least as probable. . . .*

[Anecdote]

PAT BUCHANAN, DOG'S BEST FRIEND

From Right From the Beginning, *an autobiography by Patrick J. Buchanan, published by Little, Brown. Buchanan served as White House Director of Communications from 1985 to 1987.*

For fast cash, there were no better jobs than at the post office during Christmas, where we worked twelve and thirteen hours a day as "temporaries," and were paid in the big green checks of the government of the United States. . . .

As anyone who has been a mailman knows, the hereditary enemy is the canine. Maryland either did not have or did not enforce a leash law, because north of Western Avenue the beasts had the run of the neighborhood. For two years, I had the same delivery route, an area west of Connecticut Avenue and just south of East-West Highway and Columbia Country Club in Maryland. The area was dog heaven. They got to know you, and every day they were waiting for you. Those dogs loved Christmas more than we did. They would spot you at the top of the street and start barking signals to one another, all the way down to the end of the street, working themselves up for the confrontation. Sometimes, cowardly, I would skip half a dozen houses, rather than mix it up with them—and when the protests came to the post office, I would get on the phone and yell, "Get the damn dog inside the house, or come get your Christmas mail at the post office."

Even when they were kept inside, they growled their hatred through the door as you came up the front steps. So a few of us decided to make the residents pay for their ill-humored animals. One way was to push the mail through the slot, piece by piece, teasing the Doberman on the other side until he became frenzied. Then, push the folded-up *Life* magazine through the slot, until the now-insane Doberman grabs it firmly in its teeth—then ram it home. The next day, the stupid dog would be back for more.

Another way to make the dog's life as miserable as he was making yours was to put the mail through the slot, slowly, piece by piece, until the dog was frenetic. Then, having held back the most important piece of correspondence—say, a Social Security check—gently push the letter through the slot and take it back, again and again, while the crazed dog snaps at it and tears it to bits. After this vital piece of family correspondence has been torn and chewed beyond salvaging, push it through the slot—and let the dog explain to the master of the house that night why he had ripped up the family's monthly check.

[Hypothesis]

TICKET TO A NEW DECOR

From "Ticket to a New Decor," by Jean-François Lyotard, in Copyright, *No. 1, the first issue of a biannual journal published at Harvard University. The issue is devoted to articles about the coming millennium. Lyotard, a professor of philosophy at the University of Paris, has written his article in the form of a letter to a child. Translated by Brian Massumi and W.G.J. Niesluchowski.*

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, thought and action were governed by the idea of the emancipation of humanity. This idea was elaborated at the end of the eighteenth century in the philosophy of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Progress in science, technology, the arts, and political liberties, it was said, would free all of humanity from ignorance, poverty, lack of education, and despotism. Peo-

ple would not only be happy but, due in large part to education, would become enlightened citizens and masters of their destiny.

All of the political currents of the last two centuries, with rare exceptions such as reaction and Nazism, derive from this source. The divergences, however violent, between political liberalisms, economic liberalisms, Marxisms, anarchisms, and socialisms are insignificant compared with their unanimity regarding the goal to be reached. For all of them, the promise of freedom lies on the horizon of progress. All of them lead, or believe they lead, to a transparency of humanity to itself.

These ideals are on the decline in popular opinion in the so-called developed nations. The discourse of the political class is still based on the rhetoric of emancipation, but it cannot heal the wounds that the "modern" ideal has suffered during the last two centuries. What has made possible total war, totalitarianisms, the growing gap between the wealth of the North and the poverty of the South, unemployment and the "new poor," the general deculturation accompanying the education crisis (in other words, the crisis in the transmission of knowledge), and the isolation of the artistic avant-gardes is not the absence of progress but, on the contrary, techno-scientific, artistic, economic, and political development itself.

All these wounds can be given names. Their names are strewn across the field of our unconscious like so many secret obstacles to the quiet perpetuation of the "modern project." Under the pretense of safeguarding that project, the men and women of my generation in Germany imposed on their children a forty-year silence about the "Nazi interlude." This interdiction against remembering stands as a symbol for the entire Western world. But can there be progress without remembering, without an act of anamnesis? Anamnesis constitutes a painful process of working through, a work of mourning for the conflicting emotions, loves and terrors, associated with these wounds. Perhaps the process is beginning. I marvel that the government saw fit to dig into the utopian lawn of the Washington Mall a gloomy, candle-lit trench named the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial.* We have only gotten as far as a vague, apparently inexplicable, end-of-the-century melancholy.

This decline of the "modern project" is not, however, a form of decadence. It is accompanied by almost exponential techno-scientific growth. There is not now, nor will there ever be again, a loss or turning back of forms of knowledge and know-how, barring the destruction of humanity. This situation is unique in history.

Technical or scientific discovery has never been subordinated to the demands dictated by human needs. It has always been animated by a dynamic that functions independently of what people may judge desirable, profitable, or comfortable. Humanity has always lagged behind the capacities to understand ("ideas") and to act

[Deposition]

SAY MORE— AN INTRODUCTION

From a deposition given by J. D. Salinger as part of his 1986 suit against Random House to stop publication of J. D. Salinger: A Writing Life, *by Ian Hamilton. Salinger succeeded in enjoining publication of the book on the grounds that it violated his copyright by quoting unpublished letters. Excerpts from the deposition appear in* In Search of J. D. Salinger, *a new version of Hamilton's book that includes an account of the controversy, published this month by Random House.*

Mr. Salinger, when was the last time you wrote any work of fiction for publication?

I'm not sure exactly.

At any time during the past twenty years, have you written a work of fiction for publication?

That has been published, you mean?

That has been published.

No . . .

At any time during the past twenty years, have you written any fiction which has not been published?

Yes.

Could you describe for me what works of fiction you have written which have not been published?

It would be very difficult to do . . .

Have you written any full-length works of fiction during the past twenty years which have not been published?

Could you frame that a different way? What do you mean by a full-length work? You mean ready for publication?

As opposed to a short story or a fictional piece or a magazine submission.

It's very difficult to answer. I don't write that way. I just start writing fiction and see what happens to it.

Maybe an easier way to approach this is, would you tell me what your literary efforts have been in the field of fiction within the last twenty years?

Could I tell you or would I tell you? . . . Just a work of fiction. That's all. That's the only description I can really give it . . . It's almost impossible to define. I work with characters, and as they develop, I just go on from there.

("means") made available to it by inventions, discoveries, research, and chance happenings.

There are three current trends worth noting. First, there is a fusion of techniques and sciences into an enormous techno-scientific apparatus. Second, there is a revision under way in all of the sciences, not only of hypotheses or even of "paradigms" but of modes of reasoning and of systems of logic considered "natural." Contemporary theories in mathematics, physics, astrophysics, and biology abound with paradoxes. Finally, there is a qualitative transformation brought on by the new technologies: The machines of the present generation carry out operations of recall, of reference, of calculation, of grammar, rhetoric, and poetics, and of reasoning and judgment. They are prostheses for language—in other words, for thought.

In retrospect, it is obvious that the work carried out by the artistic avant-gardes for over a century is following a parallel process of complexification. This complexification involves sensibilities (visual, auditory, motor, linguistic) rather than forms of know-how or knowledge. But the philosophical impact of this work is no less important in the realm of receptivity or "taste" than is that of techno-science in the area of intelligence and practice.

Looming on your century's horizon is an increase in complexity in most domains, including daily life. This suggests a decisive task: making humanity capable of adapting to extremely complex ways of feeling, understanding, and doing. At the very least, it implies resistance to oversimplification, to simplifying slogans, to demands for clarity and ease, to the desire to restore solid values. Even now it is readily apparent that simplification is barbarous, reactive. The "political class" will have to, must already, take stock of this necessity if it wants to avoid falling into obsolescence and dragging humanity with it when it goes.

Slowly, a new decor is being put in place, in broad outline: the cosmos is fallout from an explosion; the debris is still scattering from the initial thrust; stars transmute the elements as they burn; their days are numbered, as are the sun's; the chances that the synthesis of the first algae would take place in the earth's water were infinitesimal; the Human is even less probable; the human cortex is the most complex material organization ever known; the machines human beings engender are an extension of it; the network they will form will be like a second cortex, only more complex; it will be necessary to find a way to evacuate humanity from the earth before the sun dies; the process of selecting those who will be able to leave and those fated for the implosion has already begun, using the criterion of "underdevelopment."

The ultimate affront to humanity's narcissism: humanity is in the service of complexification. This decor is being set up in the unconscious of the young, in *yours*, beginning now.

[Fiction]

TOFIGH

By Yves Navarre, in the Winter 1988 issue of Partisan Review. *Navarre, who lives in France, is a novelist. This story originally appeared in his book* Premières Pages, *published in Paris by Editions Flammarion. Navarre won the Prix Goncourt for his novel* Cronus' Children, *published here by Riverrun Press. "Tofigh" was translated by Howard Girven.*

I am thirteen years old. My name is Tofigh. I was born in the forests of the north, at Ghaem Shahr. My father was arrested in the Shah's time. Imprisoned. My mother took us away. There were seven of us with her, I was the fourth. We lived behind a wall, under the branches, not far from the prison, at the north exit of Tehran. After the revolution, the prison became a barracks, a barracks where prisoners were again shut in, other faces at first, then the same as before, I'm not sure anymore. We didn't see my father again. I'll find him again someday. I have a story to tell him. I'm a grown-up. Because I have a story to tell him.

At Ghaem Shahr there was a school. I had just time to learn how to read and write. In Tehran I learned only how to hide and speak. We went into the center of the city only on the days of big demonstrations, when crowds were ordered. Shouting would come then, would call us, we were allowed to go. I saw hangings. I saw. I saw the bazaar windows. Every morning, for years, I saw the dust rise in a cloud over the city. The sky begins to stagnate for the day. The sun is wiped out. My mother spends hours, with my three sisters, at the watering place waiting a turn. We lived on anything that wasn't dust. My two older brothers vanished in the garbage dump in the Ghadika district. My sisters never leave my mother. My mother no longer leaves her *chador*. Reza, my little brother, was my soldier. They didn't want him at the barracks, when I signed up, because he was only seven and you had to be at least the size of a rifle. There were a hundred, two hundred or more of us. The first two days we could wash and eat. At fourteen, I was the oldest. Colonel Nasr came to talk to us. We had become soldiers, and we should consider the "guardians of the revolution" as our fathers, "fathers" who would one day become our brothers. I was named section

MILLIONS OF REASONS TO STOP AND THINK

By Bob Bergland

Rural America is grappling with tough economic challenges that have national implications. The countryside's economic and social fabric is fraying, affecting the nation as a whole.

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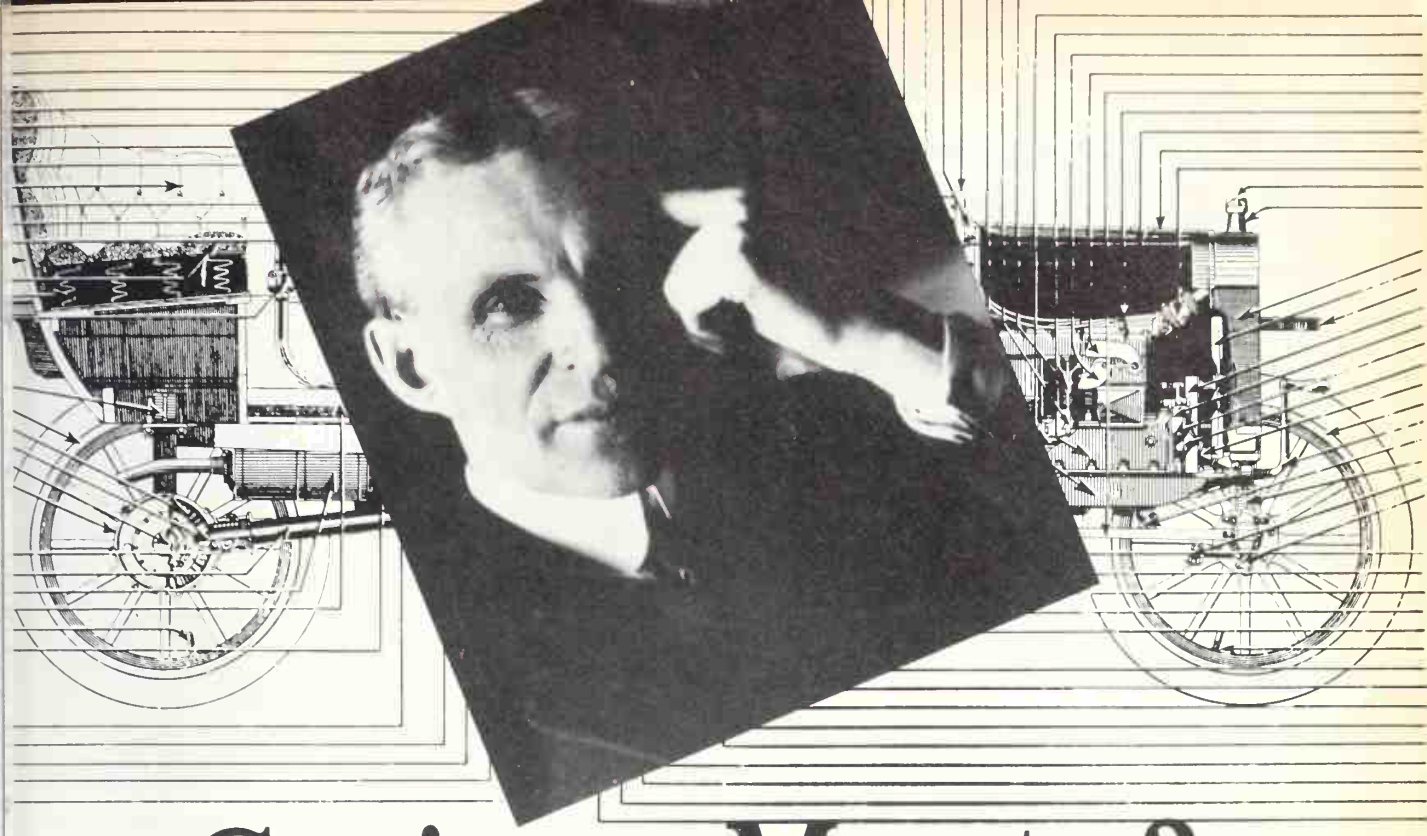
leader because I was the tallest. On the third day some trucks took us away toward the south. Qom, Khorramābād, Dezfūl. I saw the country. Immense flocks grazed on places where tanks and artillery guns covered with camouflage nets were parked. I saw anti-aircraft gun barrels sticking up out of wheat fields that the peasants were harvesting. I saw. I saw my country. I saw the camp where there were a thousand, two thousand or more of us. All we had for uniforms were the neckerchiefs the soldiers gave us. Gray. Two knots, at the front. And left hanging. I had the only gun in the section. We had all fired, once. The ones with dislocated shoulders weren't at evening call. We slept by sections, on the ground, on the earth, like pencils. For five days, around the barracks, they trained us for combat with wooden guns. Not even that. With pieces of wood. But it was somewhere else. It was the country. I'd have done anything. I would stare at the soldiers. None of them was my father. I would have recognized him, by his eyes. By that look he had when he would come home from the forests, wait while we made a circle, and then kneel in the middle. The bowls would pass from hand to hand, the nine bowls of the Tofigh family. Even Reza, a baby—we would feed him with our fingers. My father would look at us and give the signal to eat. It is that look, unique, that I looked for. The soldiers used to say, "It won't be long now." They laughed.

"The war is being pursued and we will pursue it to victory." That's what we learned to sing all together as we marched. Like a religious song, chanted. On the ninth day the soldiers seemed proud of us. I even got the impression I was considered one of them, quite special. Some gave us cigarettes. Others made us write letters to our parents. For my mother's address, I made a drawing of the corner of the wall and, with a dotted line, the exact way to go so that someone from the barracks back there could take the message and not mistake the branches. In the letter this is about what I said: "Dear Reza. It is to you, the head of the family, that I entrust this message. Tofigh is all right. He has the section's rifle. And responsibilities. Soon I will be able to send you an allowance. This morning at training I fell, my forehead against the ground. It bled. I have a bandage. But I am not hurt. It did not hurt me because it was the ground, and that's the important thing. Kiss our mother and take good care of our sisters. If I am a soldier, we will marry them off better. As soon as I can, I will brag about your strength and you will join us. Here, at Sar-e-Pol-e-Zohab, everything is abandoned. A soldier gave me an Iraqi pilot's insignia. I am keeping it awhile longer. I will send it to you in the next mail. Above all do not sell it. I want to keep it all my life. So even if you are all hungry, you hide it, promise? Tomorrow we leave for Qasr-e-Sherin. The colonel said the city had been entirely destroyed by explosives, and the Iraqis had evacuated it. All we have to do is go in, we, the new boys' army. You have my love. I must sleep. I will need all my strength. Tomorrow. Your brother Tofigh. We will come back to Ghaem Shahr."

Seven o'clock in the morning. On a height, above Qasr-e-Sherin. They made us get out of the trucks. They were armed. Their automatic rifles were loaded. "That's to protect you." Ten times the order was given to the sections to stand all together at attention. A great silence settled. They distributed shells to the leaders. So I had a loaded rifle. Then a thousand, in sections of twenty, in three ranks, almost elbow to elbow—we formed a front of several hundred meters. They ordered us to advance. They yelled, "Attack, attack!" The destroyed city was three kilometers away, down below. We began to run. The first hundred meters we hurtled down, anxious, joyous, on the attack. We were going to reconquer one of our cities. We. Some of us were bounding. Others were giving war whoops. Then, there was an explosion, a mutilated body. We went on. And suddenly so many explosions, bodies lifted off the ground in brief, black clouds. We slowed down. I heard crying. Kids' crying. Me crying when I used to cry. The littlest ones. From up above the soldiers were still yelling "attack." There were ten, twenty explosions again and each time the body of one of us blew up, flew up. Blood was squirting. I got hit in the cheeks. We stopped. We'd got only halfway to the dead city. We looked at each other. I yelled at them to stop.

Then, like madmen, shouting holy words, the soldiers, our brothers and our fathers, tore down the slope shooting in our direction, toward the sky. "Go ahead!" Those of us who moved were blown up by mines. The cries. Then there was a cry louder than the explosion. A short cry. I turned toward the soldiers. There were five of us in the section. I felt them, clutching, all around me, hanging onto my belt. And I fired. With our rifle. Against our soldiers. No, we didn't want that. Not like that. My rifle's shells were blanks. Our soldiers were coming back toward us, not firing in the air anymore, but at us. Some tried to get away by crawling. There were no more than a few dozen of us. We regrouped. Guns in the first row. We tore off our gray neckerchiefs, raised our arms, and threw the blank shells.

Then, treating us like rebels, the soldiers fired at us. Those children's cries, those cries of yours, Reza, when you pretended to die when we used to play firing squad, those cries. Real ones, then blood in our mouths, one on top of



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*An excerpt from David Halberstam's *The Reckoning*, published by William Morrow & Co. and Avon Books.
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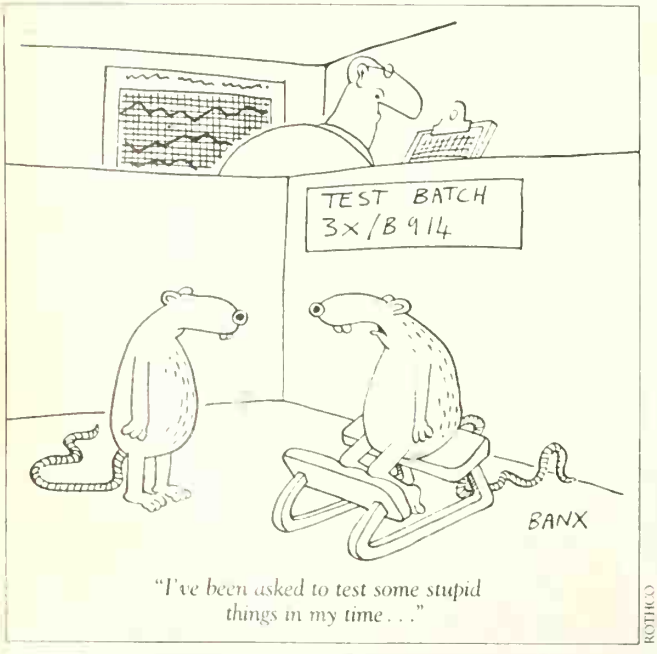
another, we were just a heap.

The soldiers left. I was hit in the shoulder and thigh. I had blood from the others and my own on my arms, on my hands, on my lips. With sweat. Karim asked for his father. His belly was open. He took my hands, plunged them into his wound as if to calm the pain, and, with his mouth open in awe, he died.

We waited a long time for the noise of the trucks to go away and disappear. At nightfall there were no more than three of us alive. I looked at the sky. There weren't any more stars. I don't believe anymore. We retraced our tracks. The hillside was strewn. I saw black birds. They were coming from the dead city. We got to Abou Zar early in the morning. They cut off my left leg and told me never to tell this story. They had to separate us, all three of us. I have a story to tell, Papa. Where are you? So who do I tell it to? There were a thousand of us. We hadn't even cleared the route. The soldiers came back a few days later with a new contingent. As many children for the other half of the way. I buried my leg, myself. With my fingers. By scratching.

At night, when he put us to bed in order of our ages, my father used to kiss our feet. When was that? Before. Before what? And why? My story I tell to myself. It won't be of any use. They are hiding me. The soldiers mustn't find me. I have seen. A girl will never want me, like this. Children, already, throw stones at me. I don't even know where I buried my leg. It was near a tree. Tomorrow I'll be fifteen.



"I've been asked to test some stupid things in my time . . ."

ROTHCO

From Punch, *the British weekly.*

[Story]

THE COMING TRIUMPH OF THE FREE WORLD

By Rick DeMarinis. From The Coming Triumph of the Free World, *a collection of his stories to be published next month by Viking. Two stories in the collection originally appeared in* Harper's Magazine.

The grizzled psychotic entered Safeway laughing. His laugh had the false heartiness of a department-store Santa Claus. He stood in front of the checkout lines, chuckling at some private observation that tickled him. He was full of expansive, arm-waving gestures. A young woman, on her way out, made the mistake of stopping near him to adjust the shoulder strap of her purse. He laughed out loud and opened his arms, inviting her to join his merry world. As his arm circled her neck, she pushed it deftly away, as if accustomed to handling the blunt familiarities of the insane. She was good-natured and not at all frightened. The man was at least six feet three and over two hundred pounds. His raggy clothes were stiff with grime.

I'd seen him before. He was not usually so happy. Most of the time he seemed stunned and bewildered. He'd stand, teetering on the balls of his feet, touching his face with trembling fingertips as if trying to remember how it once looked. Or he would move, zombie-slow, through the aisles, perplexed by the rage of colors and shapes that gleamed like hallucinations from the shelves. Once I saw him marching fiercely to a Sousa piece on the Muzak, a large fresh salmon and a six-pack of toilet paper in his cart. I didn't know his name, but I called him Muni, after the 1930s movie actor, Paul Muni, whom the man resembled in some distorted way.

Muni followed the young woman out of the store and into the moonlit parking lot. A checkout clerk followed them to make sure Muni didn't try any rough stuff. I wheeled my cart after the clerk, thinking that neither one of us would be a match for Muni if he got it into his head to fight for love. Raquel, my wife, lagged at the checkout counter, squinting suspiciously at the receipt. "Are you coming?" I yelled. I was nervous and annoyed. Muni wasn't the only reason for getting out of Safeway quickly. They were out in droves that Monday night, even though the moon was not quite full . . . bag ladies, bikers, frayed winos fondling slim bottles of fortified Tokay. A tall, reeling Indian had

Alluwant Mall, *a painting by Rodney Alan Greenblat. From an exhibit of his work at New York City's Gracie Mansion Gallery in March.*

stopped us several times. He'd wanted advice on certain items. It was a transparent ploy. What he really wanted was social contact. "Don't *talk* to him," Raquel said. But I couldn't help myself. We're social animals, and I responded to the gesture we all must respond to or give up entirely our mostly bogus claim to community.

"So, what do you think about these Cocoa Puffs?" he'd asked me.

"Empty calories," I said. "Don't waste your money."

Far away, I heard Raquel say, "*Estúpido,*" in steamy Hispanic syllables.

"Generic cornflakes are your best buy," I said.

"So, generic cornflakes, you say," he said, scratching his sparsely whiskered chin thoughtfully.

The anti-depressants I'd been taking made me thirsty most of the time, and so I went to the soft-drink cooler and popped open a Diet Pepsi. Raquel, from a distance, saw me do this. She put her hands on her hips and scowled. The Indian had followed me to the cooler. "Tell me seriously," he said, his sweet wine breath dilating the air between us. "Do they still make Clicquot Club?"

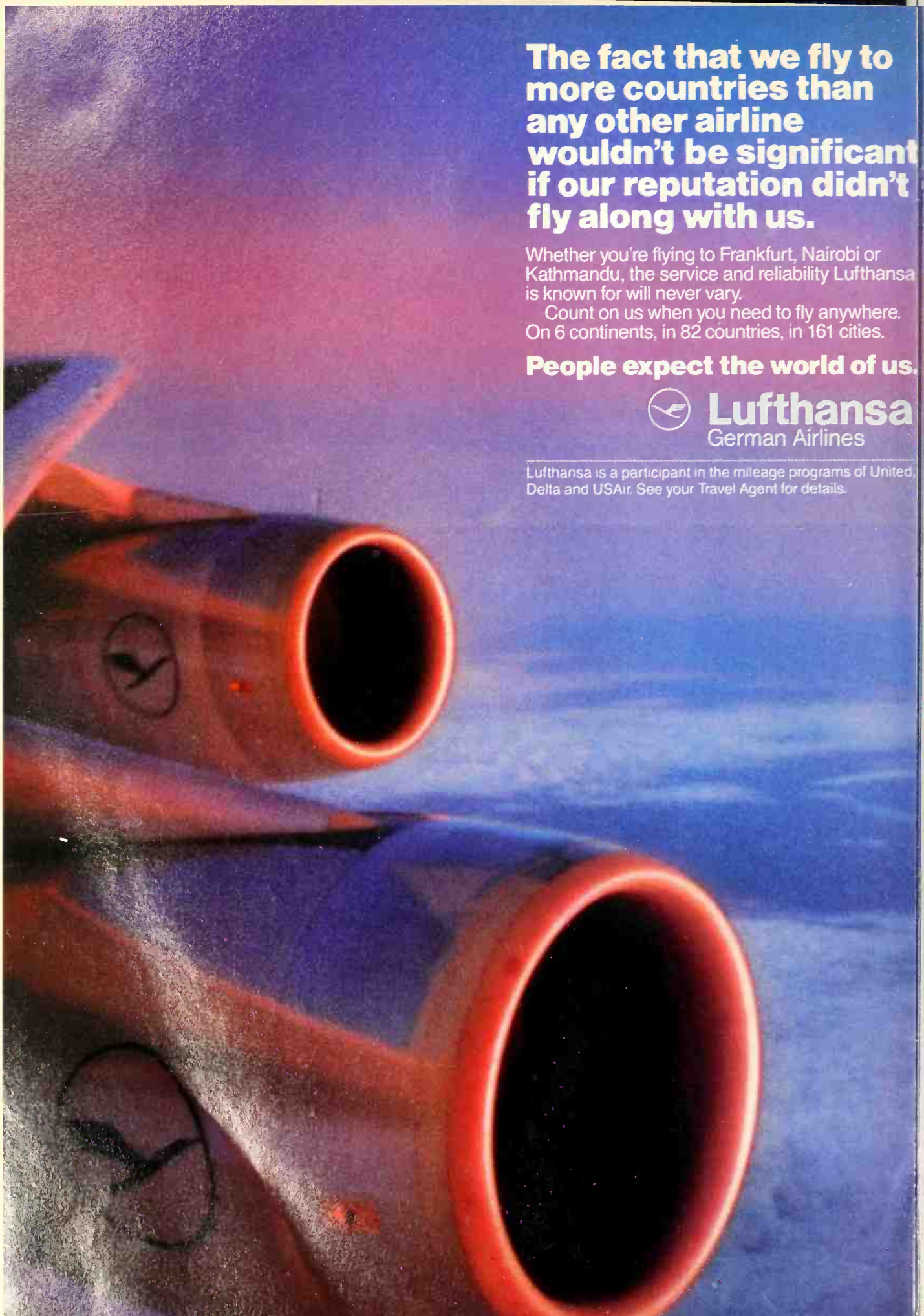
But in the parking lot, Muni was leaning into the young woman's Jeep. The clerk who had gone out to protect her was keeping his distance. He was frowning, arms folded sternly across his apron. He obviously lived in a neighborhood where such gestures have impact. Here, in the low-rent section of town, they were invisible. The young woman, though, was in control of the situation. She pushed Muni's wild head out of her window and started the Jeep. Muni was still laughing like a paid Santa, and the girl was laughing too. She had thrilled him by putting her good-natured hand on his unwanted head and shoving it away. It was rejection, but there was compassion in it. It was the best Muni could hope for.

"Christ," Raquel snorted as I backed our old Datsun out of the parking slot. "Why do we *come* to this godforsaken place?"

"The pasta," I reminded her. It was the one store in town that carried a good, cheap durum semolina. Since I was doing the cooking these days, I insisted on it.

I'd been out of work for six months. Raquel had taken a job with the city and was learning how to program an IBM. She hated computers, had a superstitious fear of them, and now, here she was, processing words for the Department of Streets. She was tired and short-tempered most of the time. Her lovely eyes were red with fatigue. She went to bed early, as usual, and I watched TV.

I watched a football game that had more beer commercials than running plays. "Guys, it doesn't get any better than this," said a maudlin canoeist in one of the commercials. Then I watched an entire James Bond movie, Sean



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Connery having sport with several gleaming creatures between bizarre attempts on his life. His wars were often fought in the Bahamas, as if the coming triumph of the free world were tied, somehow, to white sand, blue water, and submarine sex. "Compassion is your fatal weakness, James," said the gleaming counterspy under 007.

I watched a pair of lumbering white heavyweights hammer each other into early senility on the sports channel, then went up to bed. Raquel was snoring lightly. I kissed her long, salty back, but she did not stir.

In my first dream, Muni and I were in the Bahamas, gazing out at a flotilla of sinister yachts. Muni was still laughing, but with failing heartiness. Then *I* was Muni, helmeted in his skull. A spectacular urge to laugh wrenched me out of the dream and I woke up laughing. I rolled out of bed and stumbled across the dark bedroom, laughing. Raquel, her resolute back still turned, said, "What? What is it?"

I had no specific answer.

I could only touch my face with trembling fingertips as the black world around me, yoked to a rhythm it could neither escape nor follow, reeled helplessly by.

[Essay]

ON MONUMENTS

By Robert Musil. From Posthumous Papers of a Living Author, *a volume of Musil's satirical writing published by Eridanos Press. Musil, the author of* The Man Without Qualities, *died in 1942. Translated by Peter Wortsman. Eridanos specializes in foreign classics that are out-of-print in English.*

Aside from the fact that you never know whether to refer to them as monuments or memorials, monuments do have all kinds of other characteristics. The most salient of these is a bit contradictory; namely, that monuments are so conspicuously inconspicuous. There is nothing in this world as invisible as a monument. They are no doubt erected to be seen—indeed, to attract attention. But at the same time they are impregnated with something that repels attention, causing the glance to roll right off, like water droplets off an oilcloth, without even pausing for a moment. You can walk down the same street for months, know every address, every shop window, every policeman along the way, and you won't even miss a dime that someone dropped on the sidewalk; but you are very surprised when one day, staring up at a pretty chambermaid on the first floor of a building, you notice a not-at-all-tiny metal plaque on which, engraved in indelible letters, you read that from eighteen hundred and such and such to eighteen hundred and a little more the unforgettable so-and-so lived and created here.

Many people have this same experience even with larger-than-life-size statues. Every day you have to walk around them or use their pedestal as a haven of rest; you employ them as a compass or a distance marker; when you happen upon the well-known squares, you sense them as you would a tree, as part of the street scenery, and you would be momentarily stunned were they to be missing one morning; but you never look at them, and do not generally have the slightest notion whom they are supposed to represent, except that perhaps you know if it's a man or a woman.

Certainly some forceful monuments do exist. And there are also monuments that embody the expression of a living thought or feeling. It is, however, the purpose of most ordinary monuments to first conjure up a remembrance, or to grab hold of our attention and give a pious bent to our feelings, for this, it is assumed, is what we more or less need; and it is in this, their prime purpose, that monuments always fall short. They repel the very thing they are supposed to attract. One cannot say we did not notice them; one would have to say they "de-notice" us, they elude our perceptive faculties. This is a downright vandalism-inciting quality of theirs!

This can no doubt be explained. Anything that endures sacrifices its ability to make an impression. Anything that constitutes the walls of our life, the backdrop of our consciousness, so to speak, forfeits its capacity to play a role in that consciousness. A constant, bothersome sound becomes inaudible after several hours. Pictures that we hang up on the wall are in a matter of days soaked up by the wall; only very rarely do we stand before them and look at them. Half-read books once replaced among the splendid rows of books in our library will never be read to the end.

If we mean well by monuments, we must inevitably come to the conclusion that they make demands on us that run contrary to our nature, and for the fulfillment of which very particular preparations are required. It would be a crime to want to make the danger signs for cars as inconspicuously monochrome as monuments. Locomotives, after all, blow shrill, not sleepy tones, and even mailboxes are accorded alluring colors. In short, monuments also ought to try a little harder, as we must all do nowadays! It is easy for them to stand around quietly, accepting occasional glances; we have a right to ask more of our monuments today. Once we have grasped

Croton-on-Hudson, New York, 1987 *and* Maryland, New York, 1986, *by Andrea Modica. These photographs will appear in a group exhibit of American photographers this month at the Cantonese Art Museum in Canton, China.*

this idea—which, thanks to certain current conceptual tendencies, is slowly making inroads—we recognize how backward our monument art is in comparison to contemporary developments in advertising. Why doesn't our bronze-cast hero at least resort to the gimmick, long since outdated elsewhere, of tapping with his finger on a pane of glass? Why don't the figures in a marble group turn, like those better-made figures in shop windows do, or at least blink their eyes open and shut? The very minimum that we ought to ask of monuments, to make them attract attention, would be tried and true logos, like "Goethe's Faust is the best!" or "The dramatic ideas of the famous poet X are the cheapest!"

Unfortunately, the sculptors won't have any of this. They do not, so it seems, comprehend our age of noise and movement. If they represent a man in civilian clothes, he sits motionlessly in a chair or stands there, his hand stuck in between the second and third button of his jacket. Sometimes he also holds a scroll in his hand, and no expression flutters across his face. He generally looks like one of the acute melancholics in the mental hospitals. If people were not oblivious to monuments and could observe what was going on up there, they'd shudder when passing, as you do beside the walls of a madhouse. It is even more frightening when the sculptors depict a general or a prince. His flag is waving in his hand, and there's no wind. His sword is drawn, and no one draws back in fear. His arm motions imperiously forward, and no man would think of following him. Even his horse, rearing, with flared nostrils, ready to jump, remains balanced on its hind legs, astonished that the people down below, instead of stepping aside, quietly stuff a sandwich into their mouths or buy a paper. By God, the figures in monuments never make a move and yet remain forever frozen in a faux pas. It is a desperate situation.

I believe that I have in these remarks contributed a little something to the understanding of monument figures, memorial plaques, and the like. Maybe someone or other will henceforth look at them on his way home. But what I find ever more incomprehensible, the more I think about it, is the question: Why then, matters being the way they are, are monuments erected precisely for great men? This seems to be a carefully calculated insult. Since we can do them no more harm in life, we thrust them with a memorial stone hung around their necks into the sea of oblivion.

[Letter]

A BAD DAY FOR THE YOUNG COMPOSER

From a letter by Ernst Toch included in an exhibition at UCLA last winter marking the centennial of the composer's birth. The letter was written in 1948 to a music student who had sent Toch one of his compositions. Toch, who won a Pulitzer Prize in 1956, died in 1964.

Dear Mr. Webber:

I have tried my very best—in all conscientiousness—to help you. I must go one step further, even at the risk of not being fully understood by you. Follow all my remarks equally conscientiously and without sensitivity and vanity, just as you would trust and submit to the diagnosis of an experienced doctor, even though it may hurt at the moment. There is no other way toward real help.

Your case is by no means hopeless. On the contrary, you show definitely a certain musical imagination and a natural leaning, even gift; your choice of the musical form that is probably the hardest to master speaks for the earnestness of your ambition and musical taste. But you lack completely even the most fundamental and primitive bases of knowledge. And you betray your subconscious (or conscious?) awareness of this lack of knowledge. What you really mean to compose is a fugue—why resort to subterfuges and excuses? But somehow you sense your incompetence; so bashfully you call your composition, pretending modesty, a "fugato."

I am sorry I have to tell you, but it is far from being a "fugato" as well. Nor can I help having the same feeling about your psychic reasons for calling the customary "prelude"—bashfully again (and ornately at the same time)—"entrada." The reason for its shortness is none other than the fact that your muse deserted you prematurely, leaving you in the barren field without knowledge of where to turn or what to do; so you jump incoherently—*incoherence is the paramount feature of your whole composition*—into the fugue theme (good as this is in itself).

Let me make a comparison. You take a piece of cloth (we will skip the question of whether this piece of cloth, or material, is good in itself; it may be workable at least) and decide to make a suit of it. It turns out that one trouser leg is as long as the other is short; besides, one of them is sewn in upside down; the lining appears on the outside instead of on the inside; the pockets are in the back, etc. The only reasonable thing to do is to throw it into the fire and learn how to tailor. Instead you try to think of the best tailors in the country and mail the miscarriage to one of them expecting him to remedy the calamity.

I assure you, the only way for me to correct your composition would be to recompose the whole thing from the first bar to the last. But, of course, you cannot expect to find any such composer who will do that. Read my book, *The Shaping Forces in Music;* read it very attentively, study it. What you need to do is to study, to study hard, to study still harder.

Believe me, I spent the better part of a week with your score. If I had charged you at the rate I am paid to teach, it would have cost you a fortune. As it is, I may have caused you some disappointment, maybe even some personal hurt (which I could not help and which, I am sure, will turn out for the better if you take to heart everything I have told you and *read everything in the score and in the letter carefully*). I will admit that much that is performed nowadays is poor composition. But this fact cannot change my standards and should not influence yours either, if you take art seriously, as everyone who seeks real achievement and accomplishment must.

Sincerely,
Ernst Toch

[Photograph]

EARTH WORK

COURTESY LIEBERMAN & SAUL GALLERY

Serpent Mound, Ohio, by Suzanne Williamson. From an exhibit of her work this spring at New York City's Ledel Gallery. Serpent Mound is a serpent-shaped earth sculpture in the Ohio River valley, believed to have been constructed by Native Americans in 1000 B.C., and used for ritual purposes. This photograph was taken with a Diana, a camera with a plastic lens that was sold as a toy in the 1960s.

[Memoir]

ACCOMMODATIONS

By Richard Ford. From the Spring 1988 issue of Trips, *a travel magazine published in San Francisco. Ford's most recent book is* Rock Springs.

And what was it like to live there? From my childhood, this memory: I am in bed. It is one o'clock in the morning. I am eleven years old, and in a room inside my grandfather's hotel—the room connecting to his. I am awake, listening. This is what I hear. Someplace, through walls, an argument is going on. A man and a woman are arguing. I hear some dishes rattle and then break. The words "You don't care. No, you don't," spoken by a woman. How far away this goes on I can't tell. Rooms away is all. I hear a door open into the hall, and a voice that's louder—the man's—say, "Better you than me in this is what I know. You bet." I hear keys jingling, a door close softly, then footsteps over the carpeted hallway. And then a smell of sweet perfume in my room, an orchid smell, all around me where I'm alone and in the dark, lying still. I hear an elevator grate drawn back. A second woman's voice farther away, talking softly, then the door closes, and it's quiet again inside. I hear a bus hiss at the station across the city street. A car horn blows. Somewhere outside someone begins to laugh, the laughter coming up off the empty pavement and into the night. Then no more noises. The perfume drifts through my room, stays in the air. I hear my grandfather turn in his sleep and sigh. Then sleep comes back.

This was the fifties, and my grandfather ran the hotel where we lived—in Little Rock, a town neither exactly south nor exactly west, just as it still is. To live in a hotel promotes a cool two-mindedness: one is both steady and in a sea that passes with tides. Accommodation is what's wanted, a replenished idea of permanence and transience; familiarity overcoming the continual irregularity in things.

The hotel was named the Marion, and it was not a small place. Little Rock was a mealy, low-rise town on a slow river, and the hotel was the toniest, plushest place in it. And still it was blowsy, a hotel for conventioneers and pols, salesmen and late-night party-givers. There was a curving marble fish pond in the lobby; a tranquil, bannistered mezzanine with escritoires and soft lights; a jet marble front desk; long, green leather couches, green carpets, bellboys with green twill uniforms and short memories. It was a columned brownstone with a *porte cochère*, built in the twenties, with seven stories, 300 rooms. Ladies from the Delta stayed in on shopping trips. The Optimists and the Rotarians met. Assignations between state officials went on upstairs. Senator McClellan kept a room. Visiting famous people stayed, and my grandfather kept their pictures on his office wall—Rex Allen the cowboy, Jack Dempsey the boxing champion, June Allyson and Dick Powell, Harry Truman (whose photograph I have, still), Ricky Nelson, Chill Wills. Salesmen rented sample rooms, suicides took singles. There were hospitality suites, honeymoon suites, a Presidential, a Miss America, Murphy beds, silver service, Irish napkins. There was a bakery, a print shop, an upholsterer, ten rooms (the Rendezvous, the Continental) for intimate parties, six more for large, and a ballroom with a Hammond organ for banquets. There was a beer bar in the lower lobby, a two-chair barbershop, a cigar stand, a florist, a travel agent, a news agent, a garage where you parked for nothing while you stayed. There was a drummer's rate, a serviceman's rate, a monthly rate, a day rate, even an hourly rate if you knew my grandfather. Everything happened there, at all hours. Privacy had a high value. To live in a hotel as a boy knowing nothing was to see what adults did to each other and themselves when only adults were present.

My grandfather, Ben Shelley, was a man of strong appetites—food, but other things, too. The usual things. He was a fatty who played winter golf in pleated gabardines, shot pool and quail. He qualified as a sport, a Shriner, a wide, public man, a toddling character in a blue suit with change in his pockets and a money clip. To me, he was the exotic brought to common earth, and I loved him. "The latchstring is always on the outside" was his motto, and he winked at you when he said that, smiled between his thick amorous lips, as though his words meant something else, which they may have. I could think different of him now, see him through new eyes, revise history, take a narrower, latter-day view. But why?

He had been a boxer—a featherweight, a club fighter; worked dining cars on the Rock Island as far as Tucumcari, waited tables in El Reno, been a caterer's assistant at the famous Muehlebach in Kansas City. That was the way up in the hotel business, and such work was his by nature. Service. That word meant something it doesn't mean now.

What his skills were, his acumen, his genius that got him down to Little Rock and into a good job in 1947, I don't know. Loyalty and firmness, I imagine. Discretion, certainly. A lack of frankness. Gratitude. Still good qualities. People liked him, liked staying there—which were similar experiences. Everyone approached him smiling, as if he knew something

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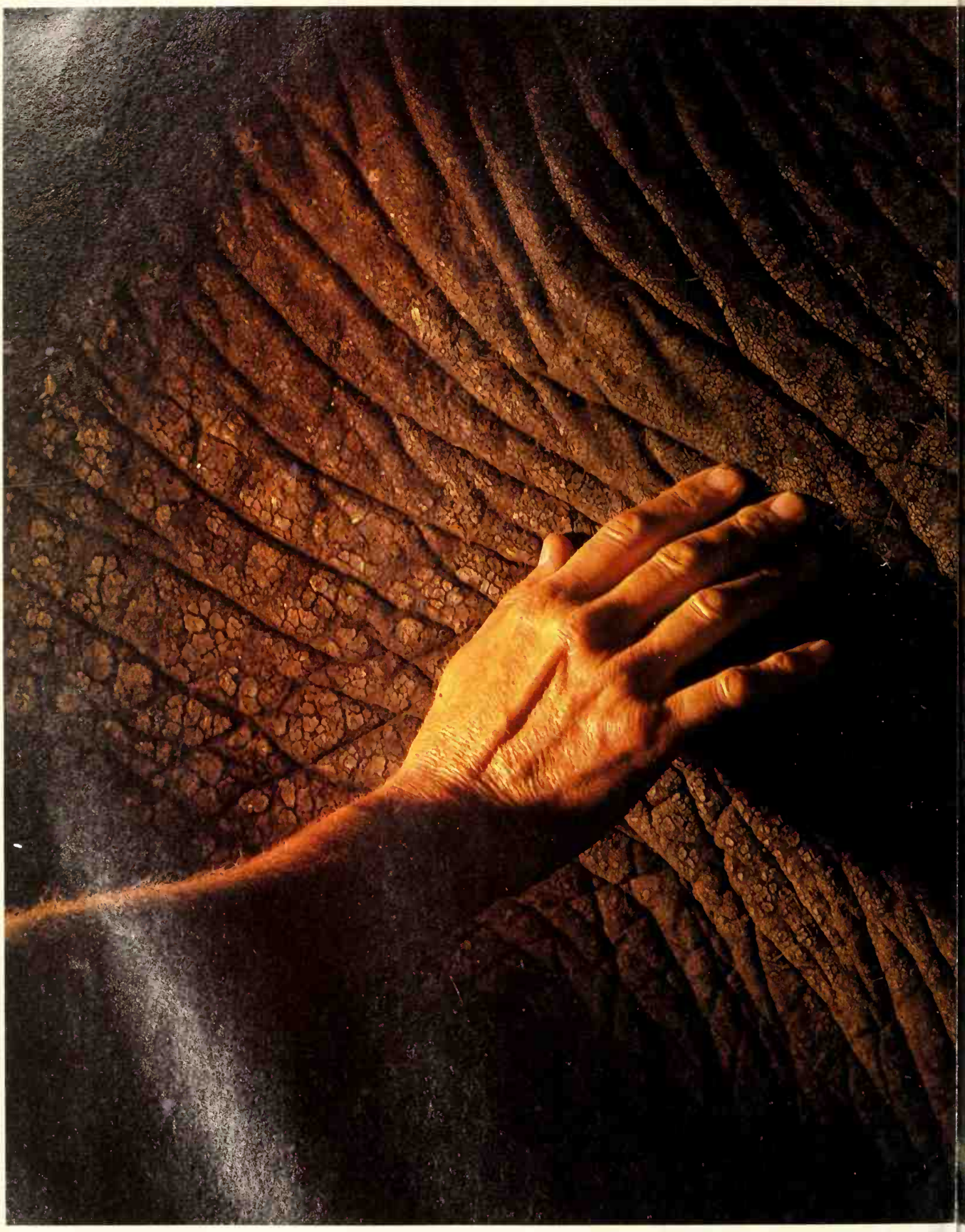

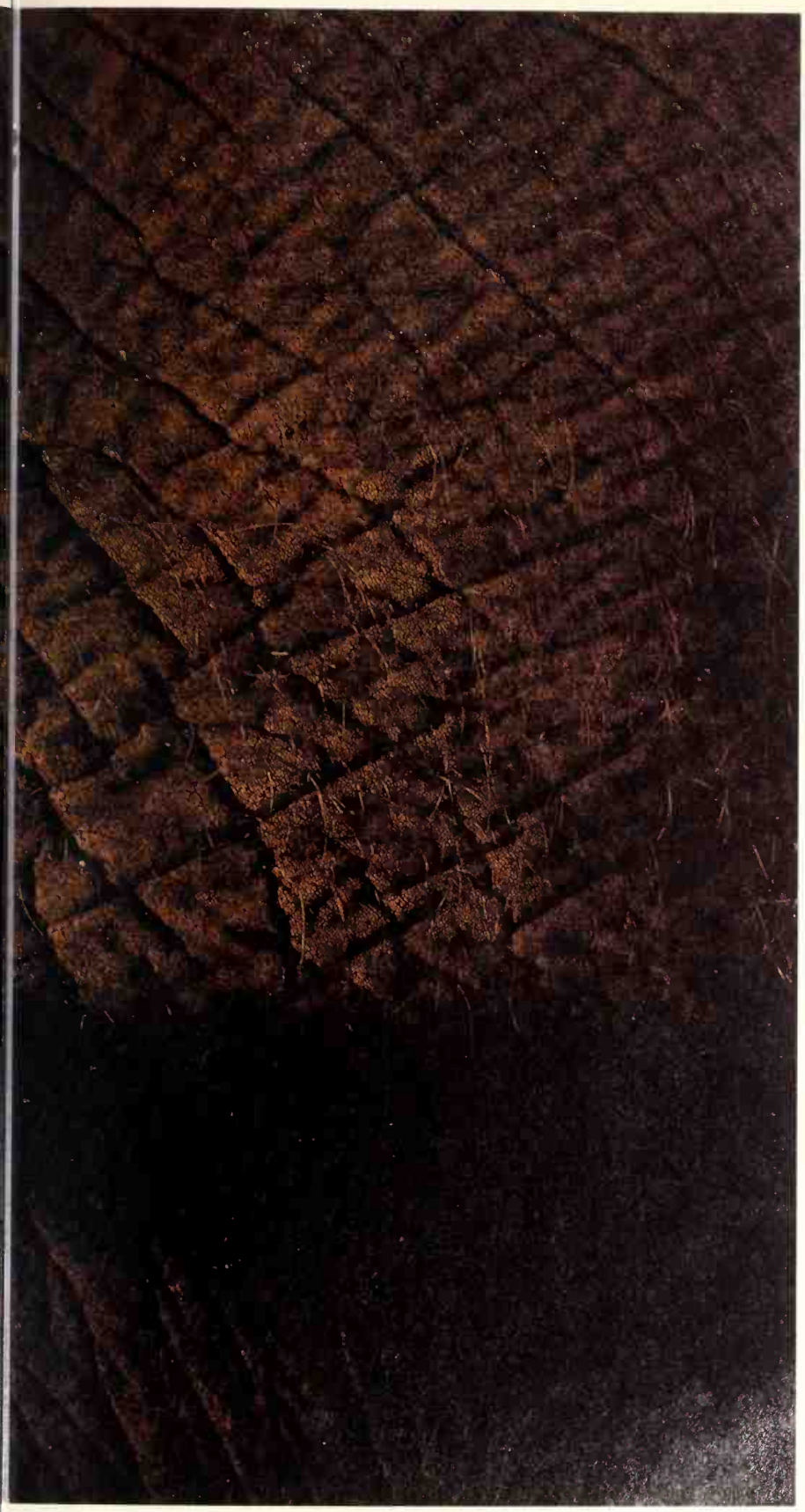

Look again.

A group of blind men
came upon an elephant.
One man ran his hand
along its flank and said,
"This is the tallest tree
in the jungle."
Two others examined
a leg and soon agreed:
"A column. Ionic perhaps."
Yet another felt its trunk
and then jumped back, crying,
"Look out, the dreaded
black mamba snake!"

We find this story amusing and quite apt. After all, many people see us as simply an aerospace company; whereas an equal amount of our efforts are in the building and automotive fields. We are a part of nearly every car on the road. And Carrier and Otis still lead the industries they began. But perhaps the best way to think of us is not as a collection of parts, but rather as a single company that shares ideas and resources wherever it can. In other words, one company with one goal: united technologies.

UNITED TECHNOLOGIES

From "The World in a Few States," a series of photographs by Stuart Klipper. Klipper's work will be exhibited at New York City's Jewish Museum from June 15 to October 2. Both of these photographs were taken in Colorado Springs.

private about them, which he undoubtedly did. They were in his house when they were in his hotel, and he spoke to them at close range, in cagey whispers, his big stomach touching them. He held their arm, cradled their elbow, spoke while he seemed to look away, smiling. He knew the joke, that was his business, exactly. Nothing in the private sector deserves privacy but sex. And that was in the air about him and the whole place. A hotel is for that as much as—maybe more than—anything. And he knew it mattered less what you did than whether someone knew about it.

Normal life, I know now, is life that can be explained in one sentence. No questions needed. And that, I lacked. "You live right here in the hotel?" is what I heard. Afterwards, a smile. These were Southerners, guests I met briefly. They wanted their own straight line on the eccentric, which is what I was to them; wanted as always to compare and contrast lives to their own. It is the Southerner's favorite habit. My story, though, took too long to get into, and I wouldn't: my father was sick; he traveled for a living; my mother drove him; I was from another city, not here; these were my grandparents; I liked it here. It was only that complicated, but I left it alone. Accommodating your own small eccentricity to yourself is enough. And even that moves you toward remoteness, toward affection for half-truths, makes you conspiratorial, a secret-keeper.

Certain things *were* acknowledged lacking. Neighbors. There were none of those. Only employees, guests, "the Permanents" (old bachelors, old shopkeepers, old married couples in cheap rooms with no better homes to hold onto), lobby lizards—older men with baffling nicknames like Spider, Goldie, Ish—men who lived out in town but showed up each day. These were all. No one was my age ever. There was no neighborhood of other houses, no normal views out windows, no normal quiets or light. We were downtown, detached from normal residential lives. Town—the real city, the coarse town mix—started just outside the lobby door: a liquor store, two cheap movies, a poolroom, a less-good hotel with whores, the bus depot. Everything was immediate. No delays. At night, out my window from floor six, I could see the town signs with black sky behind, a green beacon farther off, could hear the Trailways

heave in and out. I saw sailors, single women, older black couples standing down on the pavement stretching, taking their look around at a strange city, using the phone on the wall, the bathroom, staring across Markham Street at the hotel where they weren't staying the night. Then getting on the bus again for St. Louis or Texas or Memphis. Then gone. Was it lonely for me? No. Never. It is not bad or lonely to see that life goes on at all times, with you or without you. Home is finally a variable concept.

Travelers—our guests—were people I did not know. They appeared with bags, wives, and kids—their cars outside. They looked around the lobby, glanced into the fish pond, sniffed the air, checked in, *became* guests, walked toward the elevators and disappeared. I almost never noticed them again, did not even imagine them—their days, their houses in other states, their fatigues, where they'd already been that day, where they lunched, whether they'd argued or why, where they might go next. I resisted them. It might have seemed a conversation would take too long, go nowhere. I did not really like traveling, I think now. Traveling and hotels reflected things different at heart.

And, of course, we lived *in*, in an apartment with four rooms where we did not own the furniture but where we liked it—room and board the highly valued parts of our deal. We ate where we pleased—in the big kitchen downstairs or in the dining room—The Green Room—in our apartment. We ordered room service. Laundry was free. A lot was free. My grandfather kept bird dogs in the basement. We had TV early, our car had a good spot in the garage and got washed every day. The sheets were always clean. We saw few visitors. Complete freedom within limits. But if my grandfather lost his job—always the backstage scare story—we lost it all. How fast we could be "put on the street" for some vague infraction observed by the captious owner was a topic much reviewed by my grandmother, who had been poor, though not by my grandfather, who had been poor, too, but couldn't imagine it anymore, and who too much loved his work. Employment was undemocratic then. It lacked the redress we take for granted now—the doctrine of fairness. Hotels were thought to run best at sufferance, with things in limbo. And every morning in the dark before work, my grandfather would sit in a chair in his underwear, just before lacing his shoes, and pray out loud for his job, thank God for loyal employees, for his good boss, and for the trust he felt he had, pray for the future. I could hear this from my bed in the next room. It seemed prudent to me, as it still does.

Whatever his duties—and they were not so clear-cut to me—he was up at six to do them, gone down the elevator in his loose blue suit to "put in an appearance." Mostly his job was simply that. Being there and only there. A presence and conserver to his employees, a welcoming man to guests. He "toured the house," saw that operations were operating. That is how a hotel was run. He signed checks. He hired people, fired them. He ate *in* to prove his food was good, lived in for the same reason. His prosperity (in conspicuous evidence, always) promised others the same. In this he was not an *hôtelier*, not an innkeeper, he was a hotelman. He would not have been happy to manage something else—a store or a row of trailers. He did not look forward to advancement, only to more of the same. Time has gone when men inhabited their jobs in that way, when occupation signaled that.

And what did I do? Little. I was there, too. I lived *inside* and did not think of outside. I took few duties. I stood, I watched things pass by me. I rode the elevators, I chatted up bellboys and waiters and room clerks. I slouched around, watched lights light up on the PBX, saw operations operating over and over. I fed the fish. I was prized for my manners, for my height, for the fact that my father was sick and I was here—bravely and indefinitely. I was thought to be interested in hotel work and said that I was. I was curious, unperplexed, unself-centered, as useless as any boy who sees the surface of life close and re-close over facts that are often not easily simplifiable. We can become familiar with a great many things.

To make regular life seem regular need not always be to bleach the strong colors out. But just for a time it can help. When you look for what's unique and also true of life, you're lucky to find less than you imagined.

How permanent is real life? That's the question, isn't it? The one we both want and don't quite want to hear told. Queasy, melancholic, obvious answers are there. In the hotel there was no center to things, nor was I one. It was the floating life, days erasing other days almost completely, as should be. The place was a hollow place, like any home, in which things went on, a setting where situations developed and ended. And I simply stood alongside that for a while in my young life—neither behind the scenes nor in front. What I saw then—and I saw more than I can say, more than I remember—matters less than what I thought about it. And what I thought about it was this: this is the actual life now, not a stopover, a diversion, or an oddment in time, but the permanent life, the one that will provide history, memory, the one I'll be responsible for in the long run. Everything counts, after all. What else do you need to know? ■

HOW TO CARE FOR THE NEW BASE COAT/CLEAR COAT FINISH ON YOUR CAL

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Base coat/clear coat finishes require less maintenance, but they, like all paints, are susceptible to abrasives, which will scratch the finish or give it a hazy appearance, reducing both its gloss and imaging (mirror-like) qualities.

Wash any base coat/clear coat finish with gentle, non-abrasive cleaners, rinsing away all loose dirt with plenty of water before sponging on the soapy solution.

Rinse the cloth or sponge or change it frequently to avoid scratching the finish with dirt or grit. If you use a commercial tar or bug remover, read the instructions carefully, then try it out on an inconspicuous area first.

If you use a commercial car wash, look for one that uses a soft scrub system. A few car wash systems employ harsh brushes, which may scratch the clear coat finish.

Base coat/clear coat paint need not be polished as often as a lacquer or enamel to remove the grime and effects of weathering. When you do polish it (once or twice a year), use a mild cleaning wax, not an abrasive. Polish gently, by hand.

Avoid mechanical polishing or sanding of the surface.

Don't use a scrub brush on the paint or on the wheels, if they're aluminum mag wheels with clear coat paint on them.

You can help maintain the finish on your car by parking and driving wisely. Try not to park under trees, where bird droppings or sap, which contain compounds that can injure the finish, may fall onto your car. Try to park upwind from industrial areas. If you get cement dust or fly ash on your car from any fire or smokestack, rinse it off immediately.

When you drive, go easy on the gas pedal to keep stones from flying up and chipping the paint during quick starts. When traveling on dirt or gravel roads, put some extra distance between you and the car ahead to avoid running into stones thrown into the air by that car's tires.

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I'M BLACK, YOU'RE WHITE, WHO'S INNOCENT?

Race and power in an era of blame

By Shelby Steele

It is a warm, windless California evening, and the dying light that covers the redbrick patio is tinted pale orange by the day's smog. Eight of us, not close friends, sit in lawn chairs sipping chardonnay. A black engineer and I (we had never met before) integrate the group. A psychologist is also among us, and her presence encourages a surprising openness. But not until well after the lovely twilight dinner has been served, when the sky has turned to deep black and the drinks have long since changed to scotch, does the subject of race spring awkwardly upon us. Out of nowhere the engineer announces, with a coloring of accusation in his voice, that it bothers him to send his daughter to a school where she is one of only three black children. "I didn't realize my ambition to get ahead would pull me into a world where my daughter would lose touch with her blackness," he says.

Over the course of the evening we have talked about money, infidelity, past and present addictions, child abuse, even politics. Intimacies have been revealed, fears named. But this subject, race, sinks us into one of those shaming silences where eye contact terrorizes. Our host looks for something in the bottom of his glass. Two women stare into the black sky as if to locate the Big Dipper and point it out to us. Finally, the psychologist seems to gather herself for a challenge, but it is too late. "Oh, I'm sure she'll be just fine," says our hostess, rising from her chair. When she excuses herself to get the coffee, the two sky gazers offer to help.

With three of us now gone, I am surprised to see the engineer still silently holding his ground. There is a willfulness in his eyes, an inner pride. He knows he has said something awkward, but he is determined not to give a damn. His unwavering eyes intimidate me. At last the host's head snaps erect. He has an idea. "The hell with coffee," he says. "How about some of the smoothest brandy you ever tasted?" An idea made exciting by the escape it offers. Gratefully we follow him back into the house, quickly drink his brandy, and say our good-byes.

Shelby Steele is an associate professor of English at San Jose State University in California. His writing has appeared in Commentary *and other journals. He is completing a collection of essays on the subject of race.*

I think the real trouble between the races is that they are not just races but competing power groups

An autopsy of this party might read: death induced by an abrupt and lethal injection of the American race issue. An accurate if superficial assessment. Since it has been my fate to live a rather integrated life, I have often witnessed sudden deaths like this. The threat of them, if not the reality, is a part of the texture of integration. In the late 1960s, when I was just out of college, I took a delinquent's delight in playing the engineer's role, and actually developed a small reputation for playing it well. Those were the days of flagellatory white guilt; it was such great fun to pinion some professor or housewife or, best of all, a large group of remorseful whites, with the knowledge of both their racism and their denial of it. The adolescent impulse to sneer at convention, to startle the middle-aged with doubt, could be indulged under the guise of racial indignation. And how could I lose? My victims—earnest liberals for the most part—could no more crawl out from under my accusations than Joseph K. in Kafka's *Trial* could escape the amorphous charges brought against him. At this odd moment in history the world was aligned to facilitate my immaturity.

About a year of this was enough: the guilt that follows most cheap thrills caught up to me, and I put myself in check. But the impulse to do it faded more slowly. It was one of those petty talents that is tied to vanity, and when there were ebbs in my self-esteem the impulse to use it would come alive again. In integrated situations I can still feel the faint itch. But then there are many youthful impulses that still itch, and now, just inside the door of mid-life, this one is least precious to me.

In the literature classes I teach, I often see how the presence of whites all but seduces some black students into provocation. When we come to a novel by a black writer, say Toni Morrison, the white students can easily discuss the human motivations of the black characters. But, inevitably, a black student, as if by reflex, will begin to set in relief the various racial problems that are the background of these characters' lives. This student's tone will carry a reprimand: the class is afraid to confront the reality of racism. Classes cannot be allowed to die like dinner parties, however. My latest strategy is to thank that student for his or her moral vigilance, and then appoint the young man or woman as the class's official racism monitor. But even if I get a laugh—I usually do, but sometimes the student is particularly indignant, and it gets uncomfortable—the strategy never quite works. Our racial division is suddenly drawn in neon. Overcaution spreads like spilled paint. And, in fact, the black student who started it all does become a kind of monitor. The very presence of this student imposes a new accountability on the class.

I think those who provoke this sort of awkwardness are operating out of a black identity that obliges them to badger white people about race almost on principle. Content hardly matters. (For example, it made no sense for the engineer to expect white people to sympathize with his anguish over sending his daughter to school with *white* children.) Race indeed remains a source of white shame; the goal of these provocations is to put whites, no matter how indirectly, in touch with this collective guilt. In other words, these provocations I speak of are *power* moves, little shows of power that try to freeze the "enemy" in self-consciousness. They gratify and inflate the provocateur. They are the underdog's bite. And whites, far more secure in their power, respond with a self-contained and tolerant silence that is, itself, a show of power. What greater power than that of non-response, the power to let a small enemy sizzle in his own juices, to even feel a little sad at his frustration just as one is also complimented by it. Black anger always, in a way, flatters white power. In America, to know that one is not black is to feel an extra grace, a little boost of impunity.

I think the real trouble between the races in America is that the races are not just races but competing power groups—a fact that is easily minimized perhaps because it is so obvious. What is not so obvious is that this is true quite apart from the issue of class. Even the well-situated middle-class (or wealthy) black is never completely immune to that peculiar contest of

power that his skin color subjects him to. Race is a separate reality in American society, an entity that carries its own potential for power, a mark of fate that class can soften considerably but not eradicate.

The distinction of race has always been used in American life to sanction each race's pursuit of power in relation to the other. The allure of race as a human delineation is the very shallowness of the delineation it makes. Onto this shallowness—mere skin and hair—men can project a false depth, a system of dismal attributions, a series of malevolent or ignoble stereotypes that skin and hair lack the substance to contradict. These dark projections then rationalize the pursuit of power. Your difference from me makes you bad, and your badness justifies, even demands, my pursuit of power over you—the oldest formula for aggression known to man. Whenever much importance is given to race, power is the primary motive.

But the human animal almost never pursues power without first convincing himself that he is *entitled* to it. And this feeling of entitlement has its own precondition: to be entitled one must first believe in one's innocence, at least in the area where one wishes to be entitled. By innocence I mean a feeling of essential goodness in relation to others and, therefore, superiority to others. Our innocence always inflates us and deflates those we seek power over. Once inflated we are entitled; we are in fact licensed to go after the power our innocence tells us we deserve. In this sense, *innocence is power*. Of course, innocence need not be genuine or real in any objective sense, as the Nazis demonstrated not long ago. Its only test is whether or not we can convince ourselves of it.

I think the racial struggle in America has always been primarily a struggle for innocence. White racism from the beginning has been a claim of white innocence and, therefore, of white entitlement to subjugate blacks. And in the '60s, as went innocence so went power. Blacks used the innocence that grew out of their long subjugation to seize more power, while whites lost some of their innocence and so lost a degree of power over blacks. Both races instinctively understand that to lose innocence is to lose power (in relation to each other). Now to be innocent someone else must be guilty, a natural law that leads the races to forge their innocence on each other's backs. The inferiority of the black always makes the white man superior; the evil might of whites makes blacks good. This pattern means that both races have a hidden investment in racism and racial disharmony, despite their good intentions to the contrary. Power defines their relations, and power requires innocence, which, in turn, requires racism and racial division.

I believe it was this hidden investment that the engineer was protecting when he made his remark—the white "evil" he saw in a white school "depriving" his daughter of her black heritage confirmed his innocence. Only the logic of power explained this—he bent reality to show that he was once again a victim of the white world and, as a victim, innocent. His determined eyes insisted on this. And the whites, in their silence, no doubt protected their innocence by seeing him as an ungracious troublemaker—his bad behavior underscoring their goodness. I can only guess how he was talked about after the party. But it isn't hard to imagine that his blunder gave everyone a lift. What none of us saw was the underlying game of power and innocence we were trapped in, or how much we needed a racial impasse to play that game.

The inferiority of the black always makes the white man superior; the evil might of whites makes blacks good

When I was a boy of about twelve, a white friend of mine told me one day that his uncle, who would be arriving the next day for a visit, was a racist. Excited by the prospect of seeing such a man, I spent the following afternoon hanging around the alley behind my friend's house, watching from a distance as this uncle worked on the engine of his Buick. Yes, here was evil and I was compelled to look upon it. And I saw evil in the sharp angle of his elbow as he pumped his wrench to tighten nuts, I saw it in the

Photograph by Bruce Davidson/Magnum

The President may aspire to racial color blindness, but few would grant that he has yet reached this sublimely guiltless state

blade-sharp crease of his chinos, in the pack of Lucky Strikes that threatened to slip from his shirt pocket as he bent, and in the way his concentration seemed to shut out the human world. He worked neatly and efficiently, wiping his hands constantly, and I decided that evil worked like this.

I felt a compulsion to have this man look upon me so that I could see evil—so that I could see the face of it. But when he noticed me standing beside his toolbox, he said only, "If you're looking for Bobby, I think he went up to the school to play baseball." He smiled nicely and went back to work. I was stunned for a moment, but then I realized that evil could be sly as well, could smile when it wanted to trick you.

Need, especially hidden need, puts a strong pressure on perception, and my need to have this man embody white evil was stronger than any contravening evidence. As a black person you always hear about racists but never meet any. And I needed to incarnate this odious category of humanity, those people who hated Martin Luther King Jr. and thought blacks should "go slow" or not at all. So, in my mental dictionary, behind the term "white racist," I inserted this man's likeness. I would think of him and say to myself, "There is no reason for him to hate black people. Only evil explains unmotivated hatred." And this thought soothed me; I felt innocent. If I hated white people, which I did not, at least I had a reason. His evil commanded me to assert in the world the goodness he made me confident of in myself.

In looking at this man I was *seeing for innocence*—a form of seeing that has more to do with one's hidden need for innocence (and power) than with the person or group one is looking at. It is quite possible, for example, that the man I saw that day was not a racist. He did absolutely nothing in my presence to indicate that he was. I invested an entire afternoon in seeing not the man but in seeing my innocence through the man. *Seeing for innocence* is, in this way, the essence of racism—the use of others as a means to our own goodness and superiority.

The loss of innocence has always to do with guilt, Kierkegaard tells us, and it has never been easy for whites to avoid guilt where blacks are concerned. For whites, *seeing for innocence* means seeing themselves and blacks in ways that minimize white guilt. Often this amounts to a kind of white revisionism, as when President Reagan declares himself "color-blind" in matters of race. The President, like many of us, may aspire to racial color blindness, but few would grant that he has yet reached this sublimely guiltless state. The statement clearly revises reality, moves it forward into some heretofore unknown America where all racial determinism will have vanished. I do not think that Ronald Reagan is a racist, as that term is commonly used, but neither do I think that he is capable of seeing color without making attributions, some of which may be negative—nor am I, or anyone else I've ever met.

So why make such a statement? I think Reagan's claim of color blindness with regard to race is really a claim of racial innocence and guiltlessness—the preconditions for entitlement and power. This was the claim that grounded Reagan's campaign against special entitlement programs—affirmative action, racial quotas, and so on—that black power had won in the '60s. Color blindness was a strategic assumption of innocence that licensed Reagan's use of government power against black power.

I do not object to Reagan's goals in this so much as the presumption of innocence by which he rationalized them. I, too, am strained to defend racial quotas and any affirmative action that supersedes merit. And I believe there is much that Reagan has to offer blacks. His emphasis on traditional American values—individual initiative, self-sufficiency, strong families—offers what I think is the most enduring solution to the demoralization and poverty that continue to widen the gap between blacks and whites in America. Even his de-emphasis of race is reasonable in a society

Photograph by Bruce Davidson/Magnum

where race only divides. But Reagan's posture of innocence undermines any beneficial interaction he might have with blacks. For blacks instinctively sense that a claim of racial innocence always precedes a power move against them. Reagan's pretense of innocence makes him an adversary, and makes his quite reasonable message seem vindictive. You cannot be innocent of a man's problem and expect him to listen.

I'm convinced that the secret of Reagan's "teflon" coating, his personal popularity apart from his policies and actions, has been his ability to offer mainstream America a vision of itself as innocent and entitled (unlike Jimmy Carter, who seemed to offer only guilt and obligation). Probably his most far-reaching accomplishment has been to reverse somewhat the pattern by which innocence came to be distributed in the '60s, when outsiders were innocent and insiders were guilty. Corporations, the middle class, entrepreneurs, the military—all villains in the '60s—either took on a new innocence in Reagan's vision or were designated as protectors of innocence. But again, for one man to be innocent another man must be bad or guilty. Innocence imposes, *demands*, division and conflict, a right/wrong view of the world. And this, I feel, has led to the underside of Reagan's achievement. His posture of innocence draws him into a partisanship that undermines the universality of his values. He can't sell these values to blacks and others because he has made blacks into the bad guys and outsiders who justify his power. It is humiliating for a black person to like Reagan because Reagan's power is so clearly derived from a distribution of innocence that leaves a black with less of it, and the white man with more.

Racial controversy is all but banished from Bill Cosby's show. The Huxtable family never discusses affirmative action

Black Americans have always had to find a way to handle white society's presumption of racial innocence whenever they have sought to enter the American mainstream. Louis Armstrong's exaggerated smile honored the presumed innocence of white society—I will not bring you your racial guilt if you will let me play my music. Ralph Ellison calls this "masking"; I call it bargaining. But whatever it's called, it points to the power of white society to enforce its innocence. I believe this power is greatly diminished today. Society has reformed and transformed—Miles Davis never smiles. Nevertheless, this power has not faded altogether; blacks must still contend with it.

Historically, blacks have handled white society's presumption of innocence in two ways: they have bargained with it, granting white society its innocence in exchange for entry into the mainstream; or they have challenged it, holding that innocence hostage until their demand for entry (or other concessions) was met. A bargainer says, *I already believe you are innocent (good, fair-minded) and have faith that you will prove it.* A challenger says, *If you are innocent, then prove it.* Bargainers *give* in hope of receiving; challengers *withhold* until they receive. Of course, there is risk in both approaches, but in each case the black is negotiating his own self-interest against the presumed racial innocence of the larger society.

Clearly the most visible black bargainer on the American scene today is Bill Cosby. His television show is a perfect formula for black bargaining in the '80s. The remarkable Huxtable family—with its doctor/lawyer parent combination, its drug-free, college-bound children, and its wise yet youthful grandparents—is a blackface version of the American dream. Cosby is a subscriber to the American identity, and his subscription confirms his belief in its fair-mindedness. His vast audience knows this, knows that Cosby will never assault their innocence with racial guilt. Racial controversy is all but banished from the show. The Huxtable family never discusses affirmative action.

The bargain Cosby offers his white viewers—I will confirm your racial innocence if you accept me—is a good deal for all concerned. Not only does it allow whites to enjoy Cosby's humor with no loss of innocence, but it actually enhances their innocence by implying that race is not the seri-

I think no black candidate will have a serious chance at his party's nomination until he can convince whites that he can be trusted to preserve their innocence

ous problem for blacks that it once was. If anything, the success of this handsome, affluent black family points to the fair-mindedness of whites who, out of their essential goodness, changed society so that black families like the Huxtables could succeed. Whites can watch *The Cosby Show* and feel complimented on a job well done.

The power that black bargainers wield is the power of absolution. On Thursday nights, Cosby, like a priest, absolves his white viewers, forgives and forgets the sins of the past. (Interestingly, Cosby was one of the first blacks last winter to publicly absolve Jimmy the Greek for his well-publicized faux pas about black athletes.) And for this he is rewarded with an almost sacrosanct status. Cosby benefits from what might be called a gratitude factor. His continued number-one rating may have something to do with the (white) public's gratitude at being offered a commodity so rare in our time; he tells his white viewers each week that they are okay, and that this black man is not going to challenge them.

When a black bargains, he may invoke the gratitude factor and find himself cherished beyond the measure of his achievement; when he challenges, he may draw the dark projections of whites and become a source of irritation to them. If he moves back and forth between these two options, as I think many blacks do today, he will likely baffle whites. It is difficult for whites to either accept or reject such blacks. It seems to me that Jesse Jackson is such a figure—many whites see Jackson as a challenger by instinct and a bargainer by political ambition. They are uneasy with him, more than a little suspicious. His powerful speech at the 1984 Democratic convention was a masterpiece of bargaining. In it he offered a Kinglike vision of what America could be, a vision that presupposed Americans had the fair-mindedness to achieve full equality—an offer in hope of a return. A few days after this speech, looking for rest and privacy at a lodge in Big Sur, he and his wife were greeted with standing ovations three times a day when they entered the dining room for meals. So much about Jackson is deeply American—his underdog striving, his irrepressible faith in himself, the daring of his ambition, and even his stubbornness. These qualities point to his underlying faith that Americans can respond to him despite his race, and this faith is a compliment to Americans, an offer of innocence.

But Jackson does not always stick to the terms of his bargain—he is not like Cosby on TV. When he hugs Arafat, smokes cigars with Castro, refuses to repudiate Farrakhan, threatens a boycott of major league baseball, or, more recently, talks of "corporate barracudas," "pension-fund socialism," and "economic violence," he looks like a challenger in bargainer's clothing, and his positions on the issues look like familiar protests dressed in white-paper formality. At these times he appears to be revoking the innocence so much else about him seems to offer. The old activist seems to come out of hiding once again to take white innocence hostage until whites prove they deserve to have it. In his candidacy there is a suggestion of protest, a fierce insistence on his *right* to run, that sends whites a message that he may secretly see them as a good bit less than innocent. His dilemma is to appear the bargainer while his campaign itself seems to be a challenge.

There are, of course, other problems that hamper Jackson's bid for the Democratic presidential nomination. He has held no elective office, he is thought too flamboyant and opportunistic by many, there are rather loud whispers of "character" problems. As an individual he may not be the best test of a black man's chances for winning so high an office. Still, I believe it is the aura of challenge surrounding him that hurts him most. Whether it is right or wrong, fair or unfair, I think no black candidate will have a serious chance at his party's nomination, much less the presidency, until he can convince white Americans that he can be trusted to preserve *their* sense of racial innocence. Such a candidate will have to use his power of absolution; he will have to flatly forgive and forget. He will have to bargain with white innocence out of a genuine belief that it really exists. There can be

Photograph by Bruce Davidson/Magnum

no faking it. He will have to offer a vision that is passionately raceless, a vision that strongly condemns any form of racial politics. This will require the most courageous kind of leadership, leadership that asks all the people to meet a new standard.

Now the other side of America's racial impasse: How do blacks lay claim to their racial innocence?

The most obvious and unarguable source of black innocence is the victimization that blacks endured for centuries at the hands of a race that insisted on black inferiority as a means to its own innocence and power. Like all victims, what blacks lost in power they gained in innocence—innocence that, in turn, entitled them to pursue power. This was the innocence that fueled the civil rights movement of the '60s, and that gave blacks their first real power in American life—victimization metamorphosed into power via innocence. But this formula carries a drawback that I believe is virtually as devastating to blacks today as victimization once was. It is a formula that binds the victim to his victimization by linking his power to his status as a victim. And this, I'm convinced, is the tragedy of black power in America today. It is primarily a victim's power, grounded too deeply in the entitlement derived from past injustice and in the innocence that Western/Christian tradition has always associated with poverty.

Whatever gains this power brings in the short run through political action, it undermines in the long run. Social victims may be collectively entitled, but they are all too often individually demoralized. Since the social victim has been oppressed by society, he comes to feel that his individual life will be improved more by changes *in* society than by his own initiative. Without realizing it, he makes society rather than himself the agent of change. The power he finds in his victimization may lead him to collective action against society, but it also encourages passivity within the sphere of his personal life.

This past summer I saw a television documentary that examined life in Detroit's inner city on the twentieth anniversary of the riots there in which forty-three people were killed. A comparison of the inner city then and now showed a decline in the quality of life. Residents feel less safe than they did twenty years ago, drug trafficking is far worse, crimes by blacks against blacks are more frequent, housing remains substandard, and the teenage pregnancy rate has skyrocketed. Twenty years of decline and demoralization, even as opportunities for blacks to better themselves have increased. This paradox is not peculiar to Detroit. By many measures, the majority of blacks—those not yet in the middle class—are further behind whites today than before the victories of the civil rights movement. But there is a reluctance among blacks to examine this paradox, I think, because it suggests that racial victimization is not our real problem. If conditions have worsened for most of us as racism has receded, then much of the problem must be of our own making. But to fully admit this would cause us to lose the innocence we derive from our victimization. And we would jeopardize the entitlement we've always had to challenge society. We are in the odd and self-defeating position where taking responsibility for bettering ourselves feels like a surrender to white power.

So we have a hidden investment in victimization and poverty. These distressing conditions have been the source of our only real power, and there is an unconscious sort of gravitation toward them, a complaining celebration of them. One sees evidence of this in the near happiness with which certain black leaders recount the horror of Howard Beach and other recent (and I think over-celebrated) instances of racial tension. As one is saddened by these tragic events, one is also repelled at the way some black leaders—agitated to near hysteria by the scent of victim-power inherent in them—leap forward to exploit them as evidence of black innocence and white guilt. It is as though they sense the decline of black victimization as a loss of standing and dive into the middle of these incidents as if they were reservoirs of pure black innocence swollen with potential power.

Blacks have a hidden investment in victimization and poverty. These distressing conditions have been the source of our only real power

I think the civil rights movement in its early and middle years offered the best way out of America's racial impasse

Seeing for innocence pressures blacks to focus on racism and to neglect the individual initiative that would deliver them from poverty—the only thing that finally delivers anyone from poverty. With our eyes on innocence we see racism everywhere and miss opportunity even as we stumble over it. About 70 percent of black students at my university drop out before graduating—a flight from opportunity that racism cannot explain. It is an injustice that whites can *see for innocence* with more impunity than blacks can. The price whites pay is a certain blindness to themselves. Moreover, for whites *seeing for innocence* continues to engender the bad faith of a long-disgruntled minority. But the price blacks pay is an ever-escalating poverty that threatens to make the worst off of them a permanent underclass. Not fair, but real.

Challenging works best for the collective, while bargaining is more the individual's suit. From this point on, the race's advancement will come from the efforts of its individuals. True, some challenging will be necessary for a long time to come. But bargaining is now—today—a way for the black individual to *join* the larger society, to make a place for himself or herself.

"Innocence is ignorance," Kierkegaard says, and if this is so, the claim of innocence amounts to an insistence on ignorance, a refusal to know. In their assertions of innocence both races carve out very functional areas of ignorance for themselves—territories of blindness that license a misguided pursuit of power. Whites gain superiority by *not* knowing blacks; blacks gain entitlement by *not* seeing their own responsibility for bettering themselves. The power each race seeks in relation to the other is grounded in a double-edged ignorance, ignorance of the self as well as the other.

The original sin that brought us to an impasse at the dinner party I mentioned at the outset occurred centuries ago, when it was first decided to exploit racial difference as a means to power. It was the determinism that flowed karmically from this sin that dropped over us like a net that night. What bothered me most was our helplessness. Even the engineer did not know how to go forward. His challenge hadn't worked, and he'd lost the option to bargain. The marriage of race and power depersonalized us, changed us from eight people to six whites and two blacks. The easiest thing was to let silence blanket our situation, our impasse.

I think the civil rights movement in its early and middle years offered the best way out of America's racial impasse: in this society, race must not be a source of advantage or disadvantage for anyone. This is fundamentally a *moral* position, one that seeks to breach the corrupt union of race and power with principles of fairness and human equality: if all men are created equal, then racial difference cannot sanction power. The civil rights movement was conceived for no other reason than to redress that corrupt union, and its guiding insight was that only a moral power based on enduring principles of justice, equality, and freedom could offset the lower impulse in man to exploit race as a means to power. Three hundred years of suffering had driven the point home, and in Montgomery, Little Rock, and Selma, racial power was the enemy and moral power the weapon.

An important difference between genuine and presumed innocence, I believe, is that the former must be earned through sacrifice, while the latter is unearned and only veils the quest for privilege. And there was much sacrifice in the early civil rights movement. The Gandhian principle of non-violent resistance that gave the movement a spiritual center as well as a method of protest demanded sacrifice, a passive offering of the self in the name of justice. A price was paid in terror and lost life, and from this sacrifice came a hard-earned innocence and a credible moral power.

Non-violent passive resistance is a bargainer's strategy. It assumes the power that is the object of the protest has the genuine innocence to morally respond, and puts the protesters at the mercy of that innocence. I think this movement won so many concessions precisely because of its belief in

the capacity of whites to be moral. It did not so much demand that whites change as offer them relentlessly the opportunity to live by their own morality—to attain a true innocence based on the sacrifice of their racial privilege, rather than a false innocence based on presumed racial superiority. Blacks always bargain with or challenge the larger society; but I believe that in the early civil rights years, these forms of negotiation achieved a degree of integrity and genuineness never seen before or since.

In the mid-'60s all this changed. Suddenly a sharp *racial* consciousness emerged to compete with the moral consciousness that had defined the movement to that point. Whites were no longer welcome in the movement, and a vocal "black power" minority gained dramatic visibility. Increasingly, the movement began to seek racial as well as moral power, and thus it fell into a fundamental contradiction that plagues it to this day. Moral power precludes racial power by denouncing race as a means to power. Now suddenly the movement itself was using race as a means to power, and thereby affirming the very union of race and power it was born to redress. In the end, black power can claim no higher moral standing than white power.

It makes no sense to say this shouldn't have happened. The sacrifices that moral power demands are difficult to sustain, and it was inevitable that blacks would tire of these sacrifices and seek a more earthly power. Nevertheless, a loss of genuine innocence and moral power followed. The movement, splintered by a burst of racial militancy in the late '60s, lost its hold on the American conscience and descended more and more to the level of secular, interest-group politics. Bargaining and challenging once again became racial rather than moral negotiations.

You hear it asked, why are there no Martin Luther Kings around today? I think one reason is that there are no black leaders willing to resist the seductions of racial power, or to make the sacrifices moral power requires. King understood that racial power subverts moral power, and he pushed the principles of fairness and equality rather than black power because he believed those principles would bring blacks their most complete liberation. He sacrificed race for morality, and his innocence was made genuine by that sacrifice. What made King the most powerful and extraordinary black leader of this century was not his race but his morality.

Black power is a challenge. It grants whites no innocence; it denies their moral capacity and then demands that they be moral. No power can long insist on itself without evoking an opposing power. Doesn't an insistence on black power call up white power? (And could this have something to do with what many are now calling a resurgence of white racism?) I believe that what divided the races at the dinner party I attended, and what divides them in the nation, can only be bridged by an adherence to those moral principles that disallow race as a source of power, privilege, status, or entitlement of any kind. In our age, principles like fairness and equality are ill-defined and all but drowned in relativity. But this is the fault of people, not principles. We keep them muddied because they are the greatest threat to our presumed innocence and our selective ignorance. Moral principles, even when somewhat ambiguous, have the power to assign responsibility and therefore to provide us with knowledge. At the dinner party we were afraid of so severe an accountability.

What both black and white Americans fear are the sacrifices and risks that true racial harmony demands. This fear is the measure of our racial chasm. And though fear always seeks a thousand justifications, none is ever good enough, and the problems we run from only remain to haunt us. It would be right to suggest courage as an antidote to fear, but the glory of the word might only intimidate us into more fear. I prefer the word effort—relentless effort, moral effort. What I like most about this word are its connotations of everydayness, earnestness, and practical sacrifice. No matter how badly it might have gone for us that warm summer night, we should have talked. We should have made the effort. ■

Doesn't an insistence on black power call up white power?

Photograph by Matt Herron/Black Star

THE TC

Don't take Stanford's core

It has been a busy spring at Bloom, Bellow & Bennett, the blue-chip firm of litigators in matters of civilization and constituted excellence. The case of *Stanford* v. *Western Culture* has grown to a bulging brief. The offense: firebrands on the Stanford University campus chanting "Hey hey, ho ho! Western Culture's got to go!" The students meant a required freshman course, its makeup, and not thousands of years of moral and intellectual reflection—and, in fact, late in March, the university did quietly decide to revise the course to make it more inclusive, less obviously ethnocentric. But the good men at B, B & B know an ambulance to chase when they see one. Bennett lamented the "faculty trashing of Shakespeare"; Bellow seemed to think the students would soon take to the trees, there to read "the Proust of the Papuans." But no one should take core-list revisions so seriously, because no one should take a core list seriously. The whole "core" idea is phony, if somewhat quaint, like a wealthy man's bookshelf of leather-bound, unopened classics.

"At least one Greek tragedy" seems decidedly minimal, no? Especially when you recall that the most famous Greek tragedy is a trilogy. This is a typical core-list strategy at Stanford and elsewhere: intellectual grazing. A little Genesis, a bit of Plato.

Is it essential to read Galileo, or *about* him? This seems a concession to the science faculty. A number of books seem to have made it onto the list as a result of the type of quota system B, B & B deem detestable. One imagines the meetings: medievalists, two required and one recommended; classicists, four and three; Comp Lit . . . meet you after class.

One hears much neo-con thundering about tokenism with regard to "core" matters, holding the line and all that. But tokenism is much in evidence already. The *Communist Manifesto* (1848) gives scant evidence of what eventually came from the pens of its authors in the field of political economy. But it does allow the mention of both Marx and Engels, lending the list a look of catholicity and fair play.

WESTE

REQUIRED WORKS

Specified selections:

Hebrew Bible, Genesis
Plato, Republic, major portions of Books I-VII

Specified authors or categories:

Homer, major selections from Iliad or Odyssey or both
At least one Greek tragedy
New Testament, selections including a gospel

Med

Specified selections:

Augustine, Confessions I-IX
Dante, Inferno
More, Utopia
Machiavelli, The Prince
Luther, Christian Liberty
Galileo, The Starry Messenger, The Assayer

Specified selections:

Voltaire, Candide
Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto
Freud, Outline of Psychoanalysis
Civilization and Its Discontent

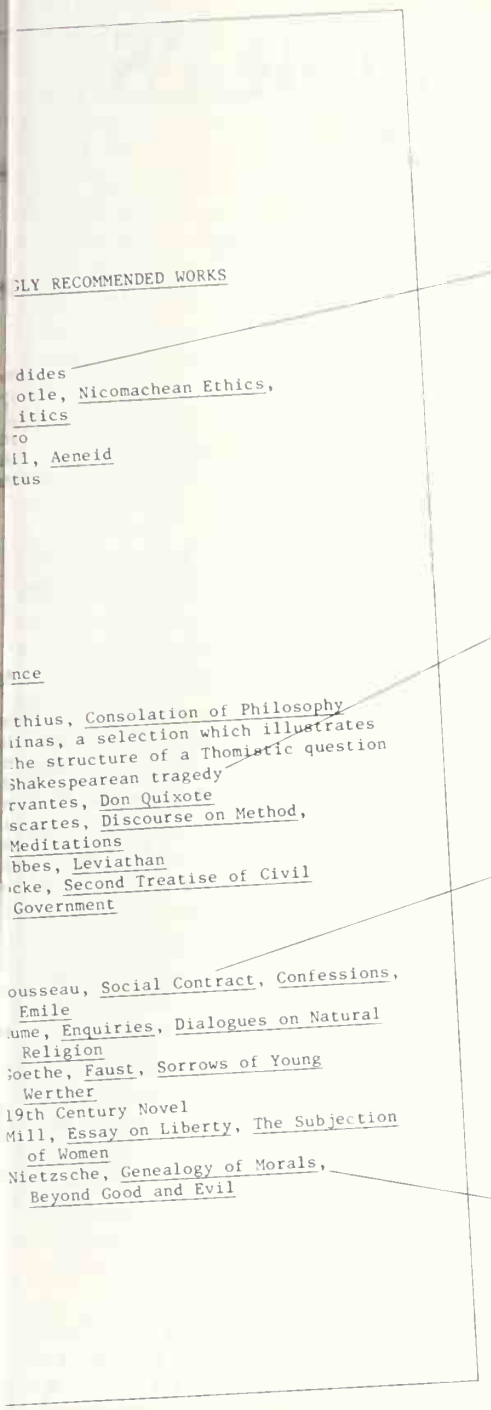
Specified author:

Darwin, selections

Christopher Hitchens is a Washington editor of Harper's Magazine.

ANON

sly, *by Christopher Hitchens*



Thucydides, Cicero, Tacitus—one sees here how the notion of Great Books, when "cored," gets reduced to Great Names. How should these authors be read—as history, politics, literature—and to what purpose? There is no sense of a battle for, or about, ideas. B, B & B shirk the combat of ideas, preferring to sneer about *The Color Purple* on all fours with *Le Rouge et le Noir*.

Who *gets* to Stanford without having read "a Shakespearean tragedy"?

Omissions abound—strange to have the French *philosophes* without even a sniff of countervailing Edmund Burke. Moreover, the books listed neatly under their headings give no sense that intelligent men and women disagree about which books belong in the canon. Karl Popper thought Hegel should be banned from the discourse; F. R. Leavis advised his students not to bother with Milton. Do any of the Bs imagine that this core list would have made sense to them (or anyone else) in 1950?

Nietzsche! The dreaded relativist on the core list? Look into it, Bloom. Of course, relativism arises not from Nietzsche—or Derrida or the Situationists—but from the use of arbitrary prefixes like "Western." If civilization means the sum of human intellectual accomplishment, it needn't be qualified by an adjective. (And if non-"Western" students want to claim North African analogues and antecedents for the classics, are they thereby not granting the premise of the classics' validity? What more could B, B & B ask?) Forget *core*—read deeply, widely, actively. I'm with Gandhi (who didn't make Stanford's list). When asked what he thought of Western civilization, he replied that it would be a very good idea.

HUGO SPADAFORA'S LAST DAY

A murder in Panama undoes a regime

By Guillermo Sánchez Borbón

The story's the same, only the details vary. Belshazzar had to drink from the temple vessels, Nixon had to record himself on tape. One little luxury, one extra nibble, and after that the fellow's days are numbered, down he comes. So it will be with General Manuel Antonio Noriega. His days, too, are numbered, and no longer much fun—all because of one measly self-indulgence. He had an enemy murdered—but not discreetly. And now the murdered man is taking revenge. He, Noriega, will wind up in exile, if not in prison or the next world.

I know, I know! Why go to all the trouble of becoming a despot if you can't have an enemy tortured and beheaded? What can I tell you? Life's unfair.

Here is how his excess undid him: In the fall of 1983, Noriega flew to Washington to help Secretary of State George Shultz and CIA Director William Casey pick the next puppet president of Panama, the fig leaf of democracy that squeamish Uncle Sam absolutely required to mask the gross facts of military dictatorship. The choice fell on a former student of Shultz's, Nicolás Ardito Barletta. His election was put through by fraud the following May. For the most part, Barletta proved an obedient puppet, but even he couldn't stomach what happened to Dr. Hugo Spadafora in September 1985. When Spadafora's family called for the creation of a special commission to investigate the crime and bring the murderers to justice, Barletta agreed to name one. Which Noriega could not tolerate, so he tossed Barletta out of office. But Barletta the fig leaf was also the forbidden fruit. Noriega could traffic in drugs and arms, torture to his heart's ease, murder whom he cared to, and his protector, the United States, would look the other way; but he must not touch Nicky Barletta, the choice of Bill Casey and George Shultz. When he did, Noriega began his fall from grace. Soon he was the darkest of evils to Washington—a drug-dealing dictator.

There you have it, the same old story, the whole enterprise lost for one moment of fun—or, in Noriega's case, one afternoon and maybe Hugo's head to keep as a trophy. How often Noriega must replay that day in his mind, the day he went too far, the day my friend Hugo died the awful death that would come to haunt a country and its tyrant.

On the day they were going to kill him—Friday the thirteenth of September 1985—Dr. Hugo Spadafora got up at six in the morning to do his yoga. Later, after his shower, he put on a striped, long-sleeved shirt and coffee-colored trousers and had breakfast with his wife

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Ariadne. Then he packed a bag, a canvas sports bag, placing in it his diary (it was book-size, bound in vinyl, with a page for each day, the sort professionals keep for noting appointments) and some copies of the memoir he'd published in 1980. He'd been living in San José, Costa Rica, and commuting to the war in Nicaragua, but today he was going home to Panama.

He was then in his forty-sixth year, and fourth revolution. At twenty-five, when other graduates of the Facoltà di Medicina in Bologna were thinking of setting up practice and getting ahead, he joined the struggle for independence in Portuguese Guinea (now Guinea-Bissau) and served two years as a *guerrillero* medic. Next came the bogus revolution in Panama proclaimed by Brigadier General Omar Torrijos Herrera, after he and a group of officers seized power in October 1968 and established the dictatorship that endures to this writing. Hugo opposed it at first and landed in prison. Later he joined the government, seduced by Torrijos's populist rhetoric; for a time he was the vice minister of health.

Then, in 1978, weary of being a bureaucrat and privately disillusioned by the corruption around him, he raised a band of resolutes and went off to Nicaragua to fight Somoza, staying on until the fall of Managua the following year. By 1982 he was back in Nicaragua, this time with the *contras*—a restless man, operatically handsome, haunted by compassion for the downtrodden and the lust to have a cause, to be in action.

Now, in the late summer of 1985, he was disillusioned again—and at the same time drawn to a new adventure. Early in September he'd met with agents of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration at the American embassy and offered them information about *contra* drug dealings with Noriega. He'd already accused Noriega publicly of being a tyrant as well as trading in cocaine; and in August he'd announced his intention to return to Panama and get back into politics. The trip he was making today, September 13, was preparatory to a permanent relocation.

The route he chose was somewhat circuitous: light plane south from San José to a rural airstrip near the border; taxi eight miles from there to the frontier; minibus from Paso Canoa on the Panamanian side to David, the capital of Chiriquí Province; long-haul bus from David to Panama City. A precaution of sorts, but not a particularly unusual one: he'd gone the same way several times before. And anyway, caution wasn't Hugo's method. His brother Winston remembers him at age ten, taking a dare and jumping from the bridge over Río La Villa, something no other boy in the town of Chitré would do. His life thereafter demonstrated much the same attitude. He wasn't fearless. He simply didn't let fear affect his behavior.

He left his house in San José around nine and crossed into Panama a bit before noon.

Into Panama. The words have taken on a sinister resonance. Once a fortunate country, remarkably civilized, where *carnaval* was said to be the only thing people took seriously, Panama had become a place of darkness. It had fallen among thieves, then come into the clutch of an interesting monster. But you know him.*

Understanding him is something different, though his early life seems to offer some hints. No father, mother a servant. Abandoned by her at age five, dumped in a foster home. Here were the makings of a frightful insecurity, later transposed into a towering will to power. And a bottomless envy. There is the motive, I think, for what happened to Hugo—more than the disclosures Hugo was making or the threat he posed as a political rival—and for how he was murdered if not why. Hugo was a doctor. Noriega wished to study medicine but missed the chance. Hugo was handsome. Noriega is, in the kindest term, grotesque. And Hugo had the daily beauty in his life that the General envied, the gift of health, the gift of youth (that is to say, of enthusiasm), the capacity to care for things outside himself. Noriega, on the other hand...

But there are many disadvantaged orphans. Not all become monsters, much less world-class. Nor was Noriega entirely deprived. He had good schooling, for instance. Panama once provided good public education, spent a larger portion of the budget on it than did any other country in the region. Noriega and Hugo went to the same high school. Both received sufficient preparation to win scholarships for study abroad, in Noriega's case to Peru's military academy. But you know about Noriega, his military life. In my part of the world the military fulfills no function (unless abuse of the citizenry be considered one).

Into Panama—a conquered country; a subject people; an occupying force so corrupt and brutal it came within an eyelash of being indicted by a Miami grand jury as a continuing criminal enterprise; and a pitiless despot with the CIA wrapped round his finger, with Washing-

Hugo's intention was to get back into politics. He had already accused Noriega of trading in cocaine

**Since then his corrugated face has blotched your TV screens, his résumé has stained your newspapers and the pages of this magazine. Trafficker in drugs, trafficker in weapons. Spy for the CIA and Cuba and God knows who else. Thief, assassin, and torturer. Oppressor of his people, vendor of his country, distributor of terror and despair. Time was when all this was known only in Panama, and in the inner circles of the U.S. government, where he was considered a pearl without price. Now, the rock, as it were, has been lifted, and the slimy thing wriggling underneath... As I've said, you know him.*

A man in dark glasses got on the bus behind Hugo: an agent of the G-2, the intelligence service

ton's blessing and support, with no restraints whatsoever on the gratification of his several lusts. This was the Panama Hugo crossed into.

He had lunch in Paso Canoa before boarding the minibus—rabbit stew with rice and potato salad at a place called Los Mellos, a shack with tables beside it under a metal roof set up on posts, behind the bus station a few yards from the border. The owner, Iván García, remembers. He remembered later that month, when Panamanian authorities maintained that Hugo never crossed the border, and when other witnesses were intimidated. García, whose friends call him "El Guapo" ("Gutsy"), did honor to his nickname by coming forward and telling the truth. Yes, Hugo was in Panama. Hugo lunched at his café. Hugo ate quickly, was in a hurry. (And, yes, Hugo was in a hurry to get to Panama City. He was supposed to meet his wife at the airport when she flew in from San José.) Before he left, he gave "El Guapo" a copy of his memoirs.

At 12:15 P.M. Hugo got onto a green and white Toyota Coaster minibus, owned and run by the David-Frontera bus line, plate number 4B-52. It was driven that afternoon by Alexis Baules, with Edwin Nuñez as his assistant. A man in dark glasses got on behind Hugo. This was Francisco Eliécer González, a sergeant in the Panama Defense Forces (PDF) and an agent of the G-2, the intelligence service, stocked by Noriega with men of his own character and loyal to him. González is a short, stocky man with Indian features and skin the color of mahogany. He wore dark trousers with a black sleeveless jersey and a cream-colored corduroy cap with little buckles on the sides. González knows some karate and is said to have a violent nature, and for these traits goes by the nickname of "Bruce Lee." The bus pulled out as soon as they were seated.

It would help to know where, exactly—which seats they rode in. I would like to talk to more people. But I cannot go to Panama. I face a five-year prison term, a death sentence really, for the "crime" of looking into my friend Hugo's murder and publishing some of what I found out. Nor would it be prudent as things stand now, in the turbulent spring of 1988, for anyone acting for me, no matter how secretly, to interview *señores* Baules and Nuñez. But it is my duty to relive those last hours of Hugo's, and every minor detail is helpful.

I know what he saw from the bus window: low hills, very green at that time of the year, broken each mile or so by *quebradas* that flow southwest into the Chiriquí River (which, in its turn, flows southeast into the Pacific)—Quebrada Gapacho, Quebrada Jacú, Quebrada La Conga. The sun I am sure was fierce, the day hot and humid, suffocatingly so, whenever the bus stopped. I just wish I knew where Hugo and González sat.

I'll make a guess. I'd have gone as far to the rear of the bus as I could, so as not to have González sitting behind me—G-2 agents are notorious louts. But since Hugo didn't let fear affect his behavior, I'll guess he sat toward the front of the bus, on the right side. In that bus the right-side seats are single. If so, González sat in the row behind him, sprawled across two seats, on the left.

At Jacú, two miles south of the border, is the first of several checkpoints set up by the PDF to control immigration. Here a guard boarded the vehicle to check the passengers' documents. He asked Hugo to get off the bus, treatment normally reserved for those whose documents are not in order. But Hugo had received this treatment on previous occasions, and so he remained calm. He went into the guard post, sat down, took a newspaper from the desk there, and began reading. González got off the bus behind him, without being asked, and paid Nuñez, the assistant, forty cents—the fare from Paso Canoa to Jacú—as if he had reached his destination. Shortly after that Nuñez heard a guard say, "Go ahead, Hugo, it's all right." Hugo got back on the bus. And so did González. As Nuñez turned to get on, he heard someone behind him in the guard post say, "The great Hugo Spadafora!" When the bus started up, he whispered to Baules, "We've got Hugo Spadafora with us."

At the second checkpoint, eight miles further on, Hugo was again asked to get off, then again allowed back on board to continue his journey. This time, though, González stayed put. The bus continued another eight miles to the town of Concepción, halting first at the outskirts, then at the bus stop beside the park, a short walk from the PDF *cuartel*—the barracks, that is, and district headquarters. Here, as passengers were getting off, González got up and went beside Hugo and, gesturing toward the door, said, "Come with me." According to Nuñez's declaration (made after "El Guapo" had set an example for him), Hugo looked at González with a kind of laugh, as if to say, "Who are you to be making this kind of invitation?" Then González took Hugo's bag from the rack, and saying, "Allow me," as one might to a lady or an old man, carried it off the bus. Hugo followed.

Hugo followed González past Nuñez, who stood at the door of the bus, then turned round and took his identity card out of his shirt pocket and showed it to the bus man. "So you'll know

who I am. I'm Dr. Hugo Spadafora." Then he turned back to González, who had stopped a few paces off, and said, "Give me the bag, I'll go with you."

As Hugo and González walked toward the corner, Baules reminded Nuñez that Hugo hadn't paid. Nuñez ran after him.

"Are you staying, señor?"

"I'm being detained by this member of the Defense Forces."

"Then the driver says to please pay me the fare."

Hugo paid Nuñez one dollar twenty. When the bus pulled away, he and González were on the corner opposite the Montero Dental Clinic by the park in Concepción. That was the last time any civilian saw Dr. Hugo Spadafora alive.

It was one o'clock in the afternoon or thereabouts when Francisco Eliécer González and Omar Vega Miranda brought Dr. Hugo Spadafora into the *cuartel* at Concepción. Vega Miranda, too, was a PDF sergeant. He'd been on duty that day at the first checkpoint, and the likelihood is that he followed bus 4B-52 in a PDF vehicle to back up González in case of trouble. There was none. The openness of the surveillance and arrest no doubt calmed Hugo, suggested petty harassment, nothing grave. But when the door of the *cuartel* closed behind him, he was lost utterly, as if the waters of the deep had closed over his head. He still had seven hours or so to suffer, though, which my duty now is to relive and relate.

Hugo Spadafora was made to suffer in the towns of Concepción and Alanje, and near the villages of Canto Gallo, Santo Tomas, and Estero Rico in Chiriquí Province. He was murdered in a place called Corozo, not even a village—once an agricultural station, then a PDF outpost, today totally razed, wiped from the earth. The officer in charge that day at the *cuartel* in Concepción was Sublieutenant Edgardo Jaramillo. Major Luis Córdoba was in command in Chiriquí Province. The puppet President of Panama was Nicolás Barletta. The country's *de facto* ruler was Manuel Noriega.

In Concepción, probably, Hugo was simply beaten. The PDF abuse everyone they take into custody, insult them, threaten them, shove them around. Hugo had an irascible nature. He would have resisted. That would have meant blows. Not too many, however. It would never have done to damage him before his suffering could be properly administered—carried out and savored by people of greater refinement in such matters than are likely to have been on hand. The autopsy performed on Hugo's corpse in Costa Rica found evidence of severe and pro-

In Concepción, probably, Hugo was simply beaten

Illustration by Greg Voth

He'd have known then and there, in Alanje, that he was going to be tortured

longed beating, but I doubt that he got much of it in Concepción. My guess is he was thumped once or twice on the kidneys with a truncheon or rifle butt, then stuffed in a cell while the joyful news of his capture was relayed to higher-ups. I don't mean to say I think the news *surprised* them. The "operation" that followed wasn't an impromptu affair. I'm sure the PDF knew exactly when Hugo left San José, probably knew it the moment he booked his passage.

In Alanje, ten miles southwest along the Pan-American Highway, then another six miles due south on a secondary road, Hugo's suffering may have been entirely mental. Panama's chief torturer was in Alanje that day. And why shouldn't he be, the town was his birthplace? I cannot name him here because I do not know *for sure* that he took part in what happened to Hugo. But I can't imagine his having missed it. He'd have never forgiven himself. More importantly, he'd have never forgiven those who left him out of the fun. What's certain is that Hugo passed through Alanje that day in a military vehicle. If the gentleman I've alluded to joined him, Hugo would have experienced severe mental suffering. He'd have known then and there that he was going to be tortured.

By mid-afternoon it was already evening in Paris. Why bring up Paris? Because General Manuel Noriega was there. Nine days earlier he'd been in Cuzco, Peru, for a meeting with Bolivian drug lord William Pizarro—this according to the Council on Hemispheric Affairs in Washington, which says the subject discussed was Hugo Spadafora, his declarations to the DEA, and what should be done with him. Now Hugo had been taken by the PDF and was about to be horribly tortured and murdered, yet General Manuel Noriega was out of the country. Odd, don't you think? No, not really. Noriega had been similarly out of Panama when Dr. Mauro Zúñiga, another physician who'd criticized Noriega, was kidnapped by the paramilitary gang known as F-8*; they smashed one of his ribs and carved a two-inch-high "F-8" in his shoulder. And out of sight doesn't always mean out of mind. That afternoon—or evening, if you were in Paris—the National Security Agency of the United States monitored a conversation between Major Luis Córdoba in Chiriquí Province and General Manuel Noriega in Paris, part of which went as follows:

F-8 is composed of members of the military, absolutely trustworthy men. But no more punctual than other Panamanians. In June 1985, they were supposed to murder Dr. Zúñiga; they kidnapped him cleanly enough in Veraguas Province, but a few hours late, after he'd left Chiriquí Province, where the military commander was Luis Córdoba, a Noriega resolute. The commander in Veraguas didn't want corpses littering his district, so Zúñiga's life was spared.

CORDOBA: We have the rabid dog.
NORIEGA: And what does one do with a dog that has rabies?

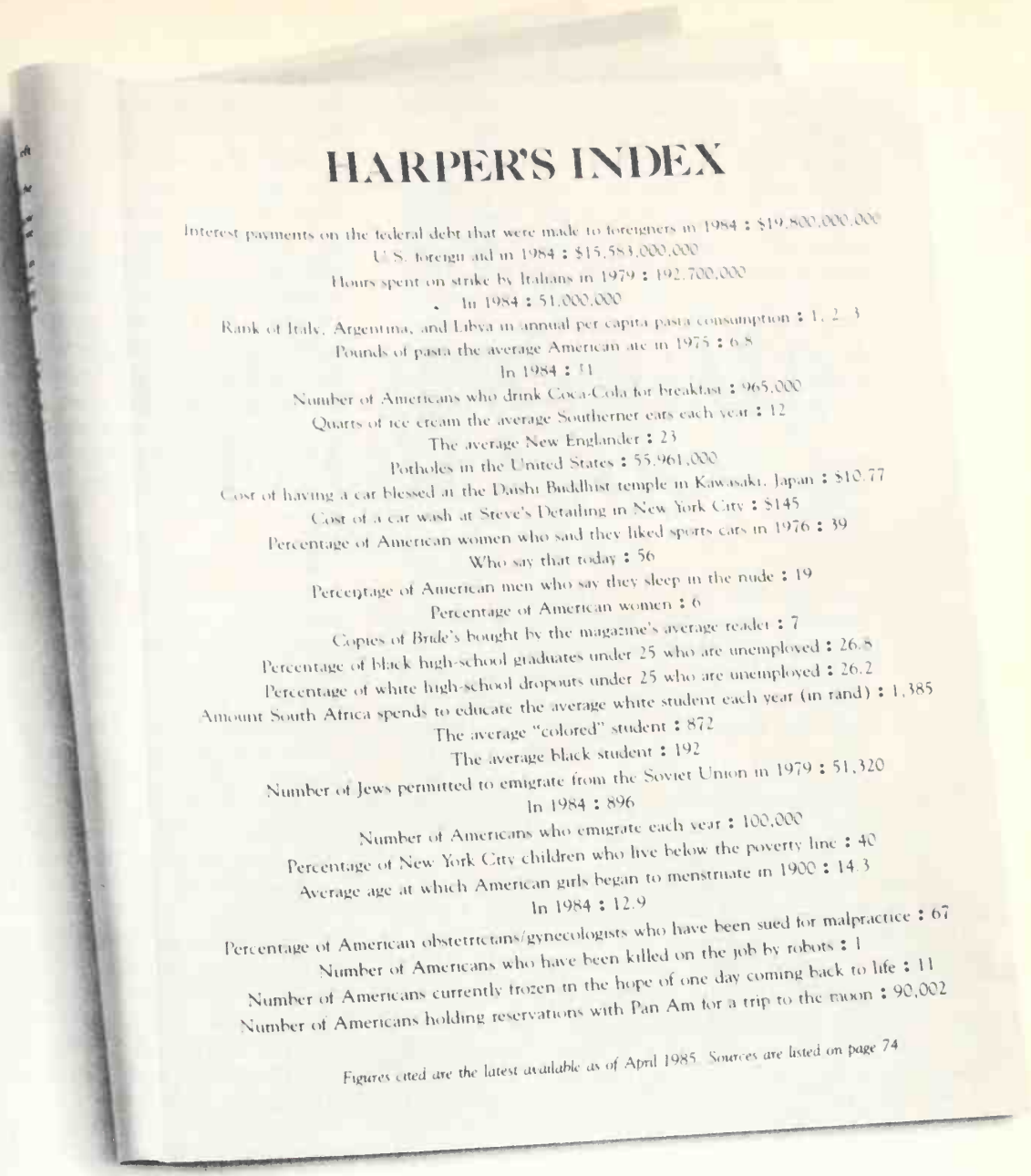
And now I will tell you what they did to Hugo near the villages of Canto Gallo and Santo Tomas and Estero Rico. These are tiny villages near the sea, and they took Hugo from one to another, like a band of carousers dragging the groom from cantina to cantina on the last night of his bachelorhood. The land there is swampy, low fields and, toward the sea, great clutches of mangroves from which one emerges as from a tunnel onto the beach—lovely, long, white-sand beaches pounded gently by the unsoilable Pacific. According to the local *campesinos*, Hugo's murderers took him down to the various beaches and away from the houses, no doubt so that his howling would not be heard. A beach party then, a perambulating fiesta, with a fresh salt breeze and warm sunlight and the beat of gentle surf.

Who were they? Members of F-8. Military men. Noriega's men.

And General Manuel Noriega himself, don't forget him. He was there in spirit. And there via the telephone too, it wouldn't surprise me. He doesn't get around much anymore, now that he's a fugitive from United States justice, but back then he traveled all the time, yet managed to stay in touch. His communications hookup included an open satellite line and a "repeater" in his house in Panama City, so that all one had to do was dial the number there to get Manny anywhere in the world. (Cost: $5,000 a day.) Did they patch a line to a two-way radio so that Noriega could listen to Hugo's howling and get a running commentary? It wouldn't surprise me.

And what did they do to Hugo? They jabbed sharp objects under his fingernails, the blade of a knife or bamboo slivers or something similar. That, I think, was the first course, though they were beating him all the while, and vilifying him and screaming threats and insults, and laughing at him, making fun of his pain. I say "first course" because although the pain is exquisite—as anyone knows who's done it by mistake, driven something sharp underneath a fingernail—there's no sense of being mutilated. Stick something under a nail, and it hurts very badly, but you know it will heal up and you'll be all right. The real horror is in knowing that one is being smashed permanently, busted up, wrecked for good.

Did they question him? I think they did. Not because he had secrets they wanted, but to give what they were doing a semblance of necessity. I suppose they asked him what he'd told the



HARPER'S INDEX

Interest payments on the federal debt that were made to foreigners in 1984 : $19,800,000,000
U.S. foreign aid in 1984 : $15,583,000,000
Hours spent on strike by Italians in 1979 : 192,700,000
In 1984 : 51,000,000
Rank of Italy, Argentina, and Libya in annual per capita pasta consumption : 1, 2, 3
Pounds of pasta the average American ate in 1975 : 6.8
In 1984 : 11
Number of Americans who drink Coca-Cola for breakfast : 965,000
Quarts of ice cream the average Southerner eats each year : 12
The average New Englander : 23
Potholes in the United States : 55,961,000
Cost of having a car blessed at the Daishi Buddhist temple in Kawasaki, Japan : $10.77
Cost of a car wash at Steve's Detailing in New York City : $145
Percentage of American women who said they liked sports cars in 1976 : 39
Who say that today : 56
Percentage of American men who say they sleep in the nude : 19
Percentage of American women : 6
Copies of *Bride's* bought by the magazine's average reader : 7
Percentage of black high-school graduates under 25 who are unemployed : 26.8
Percentage of white high-school dropouts under 25 who are unemployed : 26.2
Amount South Africa spends to educate the average white student each year (in rand) : 1,385
The average "colored" student : 872
The average black student : 192
Number of Jews permitted to emigrate from the Soviet Union in 1979 : 51,320
In 1984 : 896
Number of Americans who emigrate each year : 100,000
Percentage of New York City children who live below the poverty line : 40
Average age at which American girls began to menstruate in 1900 : 14.3
In 1984 : 12.9
Percentage of American obstetricians/gynecologists who have been sued for malpractice : 67
Number of Americans who have been killed on the job by robots : 1
Number of Americans currently frozen in the hope of one day coming back to life : 11
Number of Americans holding reservations with Pan Am for a trip to the moon : 90,002

Figures cited are the latest available as of April 1985. Sources are listed on page 74

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The cook hurriedly sawed off Hugo's head, amid sprays of blood

DEA, whom had he met with, and so forth; and this, sooner or later, he told them. That didn't matter. They tortured Hugo to calm Noriega's envy, and because they enjoy torturing people.

At one point Hugo was stripped naked. With appropriate tweaks and pinches, I imagine, degrading little prods and feels. And then someone took a sharp knife and made two careful, deep, symmetrical cuts, one along the inside of each of his legs, from just above his knee to midthigh. The point here was to disable Hugo's leg muscles, so that he'd be unable to close his legs, and thus unable to disturb the pleasure they meant to take of him next. Of everything I've learned about Hugo's sufferings, this is what troubles me most. It argues that Hugo's ordeal was nothing special, that many others had suffered similarly at the hands of the degenerate who now rules Panama. Those neat, symmetrical cuts show anatomic knowledge and practical experience. Without them someone would have had to hold Hugo's legs, a tiresome thing in our tropical climate. And think of the added torment to Hugo, the incapacity, the hideous helplessness. Perhaps the expertise implicit in those cuts was what General John Galvin, then of the Southern Command, and other U.S. officials were referring to in their repeated praise of the PDF's professionalism.

Aside from those cuts, the proceedings followed more long-standing tradition. For instance, something was rammed up Hugo's rectum, a pole of some sort or perhaps just a piece of driftwood, for the autopsy showed that his rectum was badly deformed. The act is commonplace, expressive of what seems to be a widespread pathology. Damage to the prostate gland means permanent sexual impairment. And I guess it makes cowardly perverts feel brave and manly. I don't know what they used on Hugo. I know he screamed, I know his tormentors chortled. Reliving the scene as clearly as I dare to, I also know why people invented the concept of Hell. There ought to be a place for those tormentors. That they are in Panama fills me with shame and fury.

As for the rest . . . they beat him. On the back. Blows to the kidneys are especially painful. I see him lying face down in the sand, with the pole or whatever it was being worked by one of them while others beat him on the kidneys. And on the genitals. The autopsy found his testicles monstrously swollen. For Hugo the world became an endless howl.

Then I see them, winded by exertion and pleasure, flop down on the sand beside and around their obscenity—panting, chuckling to one another as they prod it with sticks, then heave themselves up and drag it to the vehicle, dump it inside, get in, and go off with wan smiles to another beach for another round o fun.

When they were finished, spent or sated i you like, they broke two of his ribs, perhaps with a rifle butt. (This has some ritual meaning for them.) And then, like honest craftsmen, they signed their work, using a needle of some sort and indelible ink to tattoo "F-8" on Hugo's shoulder. And the sun went down, as on any other evening, hovering splendidly, then dunking itself in the ocean. And the stars came out, and maybe the moon also. I could look tha up, find out if the moon shone that night, and if so, if it was full or half or quarter, but I'm sick of reliving that day, I've had enough.

There is one last station in Hugo's calvary: between seven and eight on the evening of September 13, 1985, Dr. Hugo Spadafora was brought to the PDF outpost at Corozo in a military vehicle—he was very badly battered but still alive. They put him on the cement floor of the barracks, which had been the director's house when the place was still an agricultural station. The cook in the detachment sat down astraddle Hugo's chest and plunged a butcher knife into his throat. Hugo made a spasmodic movement. At that, the cook hurriedly sawed off Hugo's head, amid sprays of blood and horripilating gurgles.

Hugo Spadafora's head was buried in the yard in front of the barracks. His headless body was put into a U.S. mailbag—how it was obtained, I don't know—and loaded back onto the vehicle that had brought him. It was then driven into Costa Rica, convoyed by another vehicle. The border in that region runs along a road. Crossing back and forth is no problem. At a place in Costa Rica called El Roblito the body was dumped in a ravine. On their way back, the soldiers stopped at a banana-packing station called Balsa and washed both vehicles. Like Corozo, the PDF outpost, Balsa has since been demolished, razed, swept from the earth.

At Corozo, soldiers heated water and scrubbed the floor. Then they got infernally drunk.

Another drinking party was held on Coiba Island, in an area called Playa Hermosa—the area, ironically enough, where seven years earlier the volunteer force raised by Hugo Spadafora received training before going off to Nicaragua to fight Somoza. A great celebration was held that night; it went on loudly till early morning.

On Monday, September 16, a yellow dog began whining and scraping nervously near the spot where Hugo's head was buried. The soldiers shot the dog. That night they dug up Hugo's head and took it I don't know where. ■

THE VIEW OF ME FROM MARS

By Lee K. Abbott

A week before I became a father, which now seems like the long ago and far away that fairy tales happen in, I read a father-child story that went straight to the surprise one truth between children and parents is. It was called "Mirrors," and—to the twenty-three-year-old would-be know-it-all I was—it had an end that literally threw me back in my chair; an end, sad somehow and wise, which held that it is now and then necessary for the child, in ways mysterious with love, to forgive the parent.

In "Mirrors" the child was a girl, though it could have been a boy just as easily, whose father—a decent man, we have to believe—takes her to the sideshow tent at a one-horse and one-elephant circus in the flatlands of Iowa or Nebraska or Kansas. She's seven or eight at this time, and—as we have all begged for toys or experiences it can be, I see now, our misfortune to receive—she begs and begs to see the snake charmer and the tattooed lady, the giant and the dwarf. He gives in, the girl decides much later, because of his decency; or he gives in, as my own father might say, because he's too much a milk-and-cookies sort of fool to understand that in that smelly, ill-lit tent is knowledge it is a parent's duty often to deny or to avoid. It is a good moment, I tell you, this moment when they pay their quarters and go in, one person full of pride, the other sucking on cotton candy, the sad end of them still pages and pages away.

In that tent—a whole hour, I think—walking from little stage to little stage, the girl is awestruck and puzzled and, well, breathtaken, full of questions about where these people, these creatures, live and what they do when they're not standing in front of a bunch of hayseeds and would it be possible to get a face, a tattoo, printed on her knee? "Can I touch?" she asks. "Do they talk?" A spotlight comes on, blue and harsh, and beneath it, in a swirl of cigarette smoke and field dust, are two little people, Mr. and Mrs. Tiny, gussied up like a commodore and his society bride; another light snaps on, yellow this time and ten paces away, and there stands a man—"A boy," the barker tells us, "only eighteen and still growing!"—who's already nine feet tall, his arms long as shovels, nothing in his face about his own parents or what he wants to be at twenty-five. These are clichés, my smart wife Ellen Kay tells me ("Sounds too artsy-fartsy," her exact words were when I read the thing to her). In the story I remember, these are the exhibitions child and man pass by—the girl Christmas Eve impatient, the man nervous—before they come to the main display, a young woman, beautiful and smooth as china, who has no arms and no legs.

The father, complaining that he's grubby-feeling and hot, wants to get out, but his daughter, her heart hammering in her ears, can't move. As never before, she's conscious of her own hands and feet, the wonders they are. She's aware of smells—breath and oil and two-dollar

Lee K. Abbott is the author of Strangers in Paradise. *He is currently working on a collection of short stories.*

cologne; and of sounds—a gasp here, a whisper there, exclamations that have in them ache and horror and fear. "C'mon," the father says, taking her elbow. But onstage, businesslike as a banker, the woman—"The Human Torso," the barker announces, "smart like the dickens"—is drinking water, the glass clamped against her neck by her shoulder; is putting on lipstick; is writing her name with a brush between her teeth; is, Lordy, about to type—using her chin maybe—a letter to a Spec 4 serving the army in Korea, her boyfriend.

Outside, the midway glittering and crowded with Iowans going crosswise, the girl, more fascinated than frightened (though the fright is coming), asks how that was done. The father has a Lucky Strike out now, and the narrator—seven or eight but on the verge of learning what will stay with her until seventy or eighty—realizes he's stalling. He's embarrassed, maybe sick. He says howdy to a deadbeat he'd never otherwise talk to. He says he's hungry, how about a hot dog, some buttered popcorn? He's cold, he says, too cold for September. "How?" she asks again, pulling at his sleeve a little and watching his face go stiff and loose in a way that has her saying to herself, "I am not scared. No, I am not." And then he says what the narrator realizes will be his answer—sometimes comic, often not—for all thereafter that astounds or baffles and will not be known: "Mirrors, it's done with mirrors."

There's a pause here, I remember, six sentences that tell what the weather is like and how, here and there, light bulbs are missing and what the girl's favorite subjects are in school. "What?" she thinks to ask, but doesn't. "It's an illusion," he says, his voice squeaky the way it gets when he talks about the money they don't have much of. "A trick, like magic." Part of her—the part that can say the sum of two plus two, and that "A" is for Apple, "B" is for Boy—knows that mirrors have nothing to do with what she's seen; another part—the half of her that will remember this incident for ever and ever—knows that her father, now as strange to her as the giant and the dwarf, is lying.

His hand is working up and down, and his expression says, as lips and eyes and cheeks will, that he's sorry, he didn't mean for her to see that, she's so young. Something is trembling inside her, a muscle or a bone. One-Mississippi, she says to herself. Two-Mississippi. Over there sits a hound dog wearing a hat and somewhere a shout is going up that says somebody won a Kewpie doll or a stuffed monkey, and up ahead, creaking and clanking, the Tilt-a-Whirl is full of people spinning round and round, goggle-eyed. Her father has a smile not connected to his eyes—another lie—and his hand out to be held, and going by them is a fat lady who lives on Jefferson Street and a man with a limp who lives on Spruce. Her father seems too hairy to her now, and maybe not sharp-minded enough, with a nose too long and knobby. She tells herself what she is, which is a good dancer and smart about which side the fork goes on and who gets introduced first when strangers meet; and what she is not, which is strong enough to do pull-ups and watchful about who goes where and why. She is learning something, she thinks. There is being good, she thinks. And there is not. There is the truth, she thinks. And there is not.

And so, in the climax of what I read years and years ago, she says, her hands sticky and her dress white as Hollywood daylight, "Yes, mirrors, I thought so"—words that, years and years ago, said all I thought possible about lies and love and how forgiveness works.

In this story, which is true and only two days old and also about forgiveness, I am the father to be read about and the child is my son Stuart Eliot Polk Jr. (called "Pudge" in and out of the family); he's a semi-fat golfer—"Linksman," he insists the proper term is—and honor student, who will at the end of this summer go off to college and so cease to be a citizen in the sideshow tent my big house here in El Paso now clearly is. Yes, forgiveness—particularly ironic in that, since my graduation years ago from Perkins Seminary at SMU, it has been my job to say, day after day after day, the noises that are "It will get better" and "We all make mistakes" to a thousand Methodists who aim to be themselves forgiven and sent home happy. There is no "freak" here, except the ordinary one I am, and no storybook midway, except my modern kitchen and its odd come-and-go.

I am an adulterer—an old-fashioned word, sure, but the only one appropriate to the ancient sin it names; and my lover—a modern word not so full of terror and guilt and judgment as the other—was, until two days ago, Terri Ann Mackey, a rich, three-times-married former Zeta Tau Alpha Texas girl who might one day make headlines for the dramatic hair she has or the way she can sing Conway Twitty tunes. In every way likable and loud and free-minded, she has, in the last four years, met me anywhere and everywhere—in the Marriott and Hilton hotels, in the Cavern of Music in Juárez, even at a preachers' retreat at the Inn of the Mountain Gods near Ruidoso in southern New Mexico's piney forests. Dressed up in this or that outfit she sent away for or got on a trip to Dallas, she has, to my delight and education, pretended to be naughty the way we imagine the Swedish are

or nice as Snow White; she has pretended, in a hundred rented rooms, to be everything I thought my wife was not—daring and wicked, heedless as a tyrant. Shameful to say, it seems we have always been here, in this bright desert cow town, now far-flung and 50 percent ticky-tacky, drinking wine and fornicating and then hustling home to deceive people we were wed to. Shameful to say, it seems we have always been playing the eyes' version of footsie—her in pink and cactus yellow in a pew in the middle of St. Paul's, me in the pulpit sermonizing about parables and Jesus and what welfare we owe the lost and poor and beaten-down.

"Yes," my wife Ellen Kay would answer when I told her I was at the Stanton Street Racquet Club playing handball with a UTEP management professor named Red Walker. "Go change," she'd say, herself as lovely and schoolgirl trim as the one I'd collapsed atop a half hour before. "I phoned," she'd say. "Mrs. Denbo said you were out." Yes, I'd tell her. I was in the choir room, hunting organ music that would inspire and not be hokey; I was in the library, looking up what the Puritan Mathers had written about witchcraft and gobbledygook we are better off without; I was taking a drive in my Volvo, the better to clear my head so I could get to the drafting of a speech for the Rotarians or the Lulac Club of Ysleta or the Downtown Optimists. "You work too hard," she'd say, "let's go to Acapulco this year." And I'd head to my big bedroom, the men I am, the public one amazed by his private self—the first absolutely in love with a blonde, Continental-history major he'd courted at the University of Texas in 1967; the second still frazzled by what, in the afternoon, is made from deceit and bed noise and indecency. And, until two days ago, it was possible to believe that I knew which was which, what what.

"Where were you?" Ellen Kay said, making (though too violently, I think now) the tuna casserole I like enough to eat twice a year. "I called everywhere," she said. "It was as if you didn't exist." Upset, her hair spilling out of the French roll she prefers, she said more, two or three paragraphs whose theme was my peculiar behavior and the sly way I lately had and what time I was supposed to be somewhere and was not; and suddenly, taking note of the thump-thump my heart made and how one cloud in the east looked like a bell, I stood at the sink, steadily drinking glass after glass of water, trying to put some miles between me and her suspicions. Terri Ann Mackey Robinson Cross was all over me, my hands and my thighs and my face; and a giant step away, my wife was asking where I'd been. "You were going to call," Ellen Kay said. "You had an appointment, a meeting." I had one thought, which was about the bricked-up middle of me, and another, which was about how like TV this situation was. "I talked to Bill Watson at the bank," she said. "He hasn't seen you for a week, ten days. I called—" And her wayward husband had a moment then, familiar to all cheaters and sorry folks, when he thought he'd tell the truth; a moment, before fear hit him and he got a 3-D vision of the cheap world he'd have to live in, when he thought to make plain the creature he was and the no-account stage he stood upon.

Illustration by Lynne Buschman

"I was at the golf course," I said, "watching Pudge. They have a match tomorrow." The oven was closed, the refrigerator opened. "Which course?" she said. Forks and knives had been brought out, made a pile of. "Coronado Hills," I said. "Pudge is hitting the ball pretty good." She went past me a dozen times, carrying the plates and the bread and the fruit bowl, and I tried to meet her eyes and so not give away the corrupt inside of me. I thought of several Latin words—*bellus* and *verus* and *fatum*—and the Highland Park classroom I learned them in. "All right," she said, though by the dark notes in her voice it was clear she was going to ask Pudge if he'd seen me there, by the green I'd claimed to have stood next to, applauding the expert wedge shot I'd seen with my very own eyes.

As in the former story of illusions and the mess they make crashing down, there is a pause here, one of two; and you are to imagine now how herky-jerky time moved in our house when Pudge drove up and came in and said howdy and washed his hands as he'd been a million times told. You are to imagine, too, the dinner we picked at and our small talk about school and American government and what money does. While time went up and down, I thought about Pudge the way evil comic-book Martians are said to think about us: I was curious to know how I'd be affected by what, in a minute or an hour, would come from the mouth of an earthling who, so far as I knew, had never looked much beyond himself to see the insignificant dust ball he stood upon. I saw him as his own girlfriend, Traci Dixon, must: polite, fussy as a nun, soft-spoken about everything except golf and how it is, truly, a full-fledged sport.

Part of me—that eye and ear which would make an excellent witness at an auto wreck or similar calamity—flew up to one high corner of the room, like a ghost or an angel, and wondered what could be said about these three people who sat there and there and there. They were Democrats who in a blue moon liked what Reagan did; they had Allstate insurance and bank books and stacks of paper that said where they were in the world and what business they conducted with it; they played Scrabble and Clue and chose to watch the news Dan Rather read. The wife, who once upon a time could run fast enough to be useful in flag football, now used all her energy to keep mostly white-collar rednecks from using the words "nigger" and "spic" at her parties; the son, who had once wanted to be an astronaut or a Houston brain surgeon, now aimed to be the only Ph.D. in computer science to win the Masters in Augusta, Georgia; and the father, well, what was there to say about a supposedly learned man for whom the spitting image of God—who was up and yonder and everywhere—was his own father, a bent-over and gin-soaked cattle rancher in Midland, Texas? I hovered in that corner, distant and disinterested, and then Ellen Kay spoke to Pudge, and I came rushing back, dumb and helpless as anything human that falls from a great height.

"Daddy says you had a good round this afternoon," Ellen Kay began. "You had an especially nice wedge shot, he says." She was being sneaky, which my own sneaky self admired; and Pudge quit the work his chewing was, a little confusion in his round, smart face. He was processing, that machine between his ears crunching data that in no way could ever be, and for the fifteen seconds we made eye contact, I wanted him to put aside reason and logic and algebra and see me with his guts and heart. On his lip he had a crumb that, if you didn't tell him, would stay until kingdom come; I wanted him to stop blinking and wrinkling his forehead like a first-year theater student. The air was heavy in that room, the light coming from eight directions at once, and I wanted to remind him of our trip last summer to the Phoenix Open and that too-scholarly talk we'd had about the often mixed-up relations between men and women. I had a picture of me throwing a ball to him, and of him catching it. I had a picture of him learning to drive a stick shift, and of him so carefully mowing our lawn. Oddly, I thought about fishing, which I hate, and bowling, which I am silly at, and then Ellen Kay, putting detergent in the dishwasher, asked him again about events that never happened, and I took a deep breath that I expected to hold until the horror stopped.

Here is that second pause I spoke of—that moment, before time lurches forward again, when the eye needs to look elsewhere to see what is ruined, what not. Pudge now knew I was lying. His eyes went here and there, to the clock above my shoulder, to his mother's overwatered geranium on the windowsill, to his mostly empty plate. He was learning something about me—and about himself, too. Like his counterpart in "Mirrors," he was seeing that I, his father, was afraid and weak and damaged; and like the invented Daddy in that story, a Daddy whose interior life we were not permitted to see, I wanted my own child, however numbed or shocked, to forgive me for the tilt the world now stood at, to say I was not responsible for the sad magic trick our common back-and-forth really is. "Tell her," I said. I had in mind a story he could confirm—the Coke we shared in the clubhouse, a corny joke that was heard, and the help I tried to be with his short game—a story that had nowhere in it, two days ago, a father cold and alone and small. ■

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A: He has only two feet.

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CYCLONE!

Rising to the fall

By Peter Schjeldahl

The Cyclone is art, sex, God, the greatest. It is the most fun you can have without risking bad ethics. I rode the Cyclone seven times one afternoon last summer, and I am here to tell everybody that it is fun for fun's sake, the pure abstract heart of the human capacity for getting a kick out of anything. Yes, it may be anguishing initially. (I promise to tell the truth.) Terrifying, even, the first time or two the train is hauled upward with groans and creaks and with you in it. At the top then—where there is sudden strange quiet but for the fluttering of two tattered flags, and you have a poignantly brief view of Brooklyn, and of ships far out on the Atlantic—you may feel very lonely and that you have made a serious mistake, cursing yourself in the last gleam of the reflective consciousness you are about, abruptly, to leave up there between the flags like an abandoned thought-balloon. To keep yourself company by screaming may help, and no one is noticing: try it. After a couple of rides, panic abates, and after four or five you aren't even frightened, exactly, but *stimulated*, blissed, sent. The squirt of adrenaline you will never cease to have at the top as the train lumbers, wobbling slightly, into the plunge, finally fuels just happy wonderment because you can't, and never will, *believe* what is going to happen.

Every roller coaster has that first, immense drop. In practical terms, it provides the oomph for the entire ride, which is of course impelled by nothing but ecologically sound gravity, momentum, and the odd slingshot of centrifugal force. The coaster is basically an ornate means of falling and a poem about physics in parts or stanzas, with jokes. The special quality of the Cyclone is how different, how *articulated*, all the components of its poem are, the whole of which lasts a minute and thirty-some seconds—exactly the right length, composed of distinct and perfect moments. By my fifth ride, my heart was leaping at the onset of each segment as at the approach of a dear old friend, and melting with instantaneous nostalgia for each at its finish.

I think every part of the Cyclone should have a name, the better to be recalled and accurately esteemed. In my mind, the big drop is Kismet—fate, destiny. I can't think of what to call the second, a mystery drop commenced in a jiffy after we have been whipped around, but good, coming out of Kismet. (Someday soon I will devote particular attention to the huge and vio-

Peter Schjeldahl is a poet and art critic.

Photographs by James Hamilton

lent but elusive second drop.) I do know that the third drop's name can only be Pasha. It is so round and generous, rich and powerful, looking like a killer going in but then actually like a crash landing in feathers that allows, for the first time in the ride, an instant for luxuriating in one's endorphin rush.

This brings me to another important function of the first drop, which (I firmly contend) is to trigger the release of endorphins, natural morphine, into the bloodstream by persuading the organism that it is going to die. I know all about endorphins from reading the *New York Times* science section, and from an accident a few years ago. I broke my elbow, which is something not to do. It hurts. Or let me put it this way: in relation to what I had previously understood of pain, the sensation of breaking an elbow was *a whole new idea*, a new continent suddenly—whole unknown worlds of pain out there over the horizon. I was aghast, when I broke my elbow, at the extent of my naïveté about pain—but only for a second. Then I was somewhere else, pain-free, I think it was a cocktail party, but confusing, I didn't recognize anybody. On some level I knew the party wasn't real, that I was in another, real place which had something unpleasant about it that made me not want to be there, but then I began to be afraid that if I stayed at the party I would be unable ever to be real again, so with an effort of will I returned to my body, which was sitting up with family members leaning over. The pain returned, but muffled and dull, drastically lessened. Endorphins.

Other things than breaking an elbow can give you an endorphin high, and one of them is suddenly falling ninety-some feet, seeing the ground charge directly at you. I think the forebrain, loaded with all sorts of chemical gimmicks we don't suspect, just there for special occasions, registers the situation, and, quick, pours a last-minute, bon voyage endorphin highball: "Hey, [*your name here*], this one's for you!" That's why it's important to ride the Cyclone many times, to comb out the distraction of terror—which gradually yields to the accumulating evidence that you are not dead—in order to savor the elixir for its own sake and for the sake of loving God or whatever—Nature—for cunningly secreted kindnesses. But Kismet is such a zonk, and the anonymous second drop is so perplexing and a zonk, too, that it isn't until mid-Pasha, in great fleshy Pasha's lap, that consciousness catches up with physiologic ravishment. Some part of my soul, because of the Cyclone, is still and will remain forever in that state, which I think is a zone of overlap among the heavens of all the world's mystic religions, where transcendent swamis bump around with freaked Spanish women saints. Blitzed in Pasha permanently, I have this lasting glimpse into the beyond that is not beyond, and you know what I'm talking about, or you don't.

It's important to ride the Cyclone many times, to comb out the distraction of terror

Rolling up out of Pasha, we enter the part of the Cyclone that won't quit laughing. First there's the whoop of a whipping hairpin curve, which, if someone is sitting with you, Siamese-twins you. (Having tried different cars in different company, I prefer being alone at the very front—call me a classicist.) The ensuing dips, humps, dives, and shimmies that roar, chortle, cackle, and snort continue just long enough to suggest that they may go on forever—as worrisome as the thought, when you're laughing hard, that maybe you can never stop—and then it's hello, Irene. Why do I think Irene is the name of the very sharp drop, not deep but savage, that wipes the grin off the laughing part of the Cyclone? (Special about it is a crosspiece, low over the track at the bottom, that you swear is going to fetch you square in the eyebrows.) Irene is always the name—or kind of name, slightly unusual but banal—of the ordinary-seeming girl whom a young man may pursue

A righteous ride is hands on, though lightly, like grace

idly, in a bored time, and then *wham!* fall horribly in love with, blasted in love with this person he never bothered to even particularly look at and now it's too late, she's his universe, Waterloo, *personal* Kismet. This is one good reason I can think of for growing older: learning an aversion reflex for girls named something like Irene. In this smallish but vicious, sobering drop, abstract shapes of my own youthful romantic sorrows do not fail to flash before my inner eye . . . but then, with a jarring zoom up and around, I am once more grown-up, wised-up me, and the rest of the ride is rejoicing.

The Cyclone differs from other roller coasters in being (a) a work of art and (b) old, and not only old but old-looking, decrepit, rusting in its metal parts and peeling in its more numerous wooden parts, filthy throughout and jammed into a wire (Cyclone!) fence abutting cracked sidewalks of the Third World sinkhole that Coney Island is, intoxicatingly. Nor is it to be denied or concealed that the Cyclone, unlike newer coasters, tends to run *rough*, though each ride is unique and some are inexplicably velvety. One time the vibration, with the wheels shrieking and the cars threatening to explode

with strain, made me think, "This is *no fun at all!*" It was an awful moment, with a sickening sense of betrayal and icy-fingered doubt: was my love malign?

That was my worst ride, which left me with a painfully yanked muscle in my shoulder, but I am glad to say it wasn't my last. I got back on like a thrown cowboy and discovered that the secret of handling the rough rides is indeed like riding a horse, at trot or gallop—not tensing against it, as I had, but posting and rolling. It's all in the thighs and rear end, as I especially realized when—what the hell—I joined pimpli teenagers in the arms-raised *no hands!* trick. should mention that a heavy, cushioned r straining bar locks down snugly into your l and is very reassuring, although, like everythi upholstered in the cars, it may be cracked slashed and leaking tufts of stuffing from und swatches of gray gaffer's tape. One thing cons tently disquieting is how, under stress, a ca wooden sides may *give* a bit. I wish th wouldn't do that, or that my imagination we less vivid. If a side did happen to fail on a curv one would depart like toothpaste from stomped-on tube.

I was proud of braving the *no hands!* po ture—as trusting in the restraining bar as devout child in his heavenly Father—partic larly the first time I did it, while emerging fro the slinging turn that succeeds Irene into th long, long careen that bottoms out at absolu ground level a few feet from the fence whe pedestrians invariably gather to watch, tran fixed. I call this swift, showy glide Celebrit the ride's almost over, and afflatus swells th chest. But going *no hands!* soon feels as chea and callow as it looks, blocking with vulg self-centeredness th wahoo-glimmering-awa of-personality-in-con vulsive-Nirvana that the Cyclone's essence A righteous ride is hand on, though lightly, lik grace. The payoff is in timacy in the sweet di minuendo, the jigglin and chuckling smart lit tle bumps and dandlin dips that bring us to quick, pillowy decelera tion in the shed, smell ing of dirty machine oil where we began an will begin again. It is warm debriefing, this las part: "Wasn't that *great?*" it says. "Want to g again?"

Of course I do, but first there is the final stag of absorption, when you squeeze out (it's easy t bang a knee then, so watch it) to stand wobbl but weightless, euphoric, and then to enjoy th sensation of walking as if it were a neat thin you had just invented. Out on the sidewalk, th object of curious gazes, you see that they se that you see them, earthlings, in a diminishin perspective, through the wrong end of the tele scope of your pleasure, and your heart is pitying You nod, smiling, to convey that yes, the should ride, and no, they won't regret it.

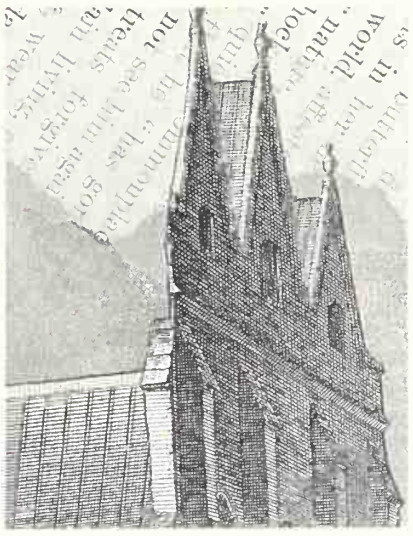
THE REASON FOR STORIES

Toward a moral fiction

By Robert Stone

Last spring the writer and critic William Gass published an essay in this magazine entitled "Goodness Knows Nothing of Beauty," an essay which toyed with the proposition that art and moral aspiration were mutually distant. Statements of this view very often seek to replicate in their style the kind of cool, amoral elegance they claim for good art, and Gass's piece is not in this regard exceptional. It is characterized by paradox, alliteration, and a faintly decadent naughtiness suggestive of intense sophistication. In the end, as such pieces often do, it resolves itself solipsistically; that is, it explains itself away in terms of its own moral and aesthetic definitions. But it is interesting to see this old opposition between art and morality appear again, offered by a commentator usually wise and insightful.

"To be a preacher is to bring your sense of sin to the front of the church," Gass writes, "but to be an artist is to give to every mean and ardent, petty and profound, feature of the soul a glorious godlike shape." If this means that you get no points in art for good intentions, no one would argue. But I find here echoes of an old antinomian tendency that goes back



at least to Nietzsche. It has been argued by people as different as José Ortega y Gasset and Oscar Wilde; by Joyce speaking in character as Stephen Daedalus; and by Shaw during the period when he was writing *Major Barbara* and, it now appears, attempting to invent fascism.

In this antinomian vision, morality and art are independent and even in opposition. On the right squats morality. It may be imagined as a neo-Gothic structure—immense, ornate, and sterile. Its self-satisfaction, lack of imagination, and philistine sentimentality are advertised in its every plane and line. Architecturally it resembles the Mormon Temple, the one in downtown Salt Lake City, not the Hollywood-biblical one on Santa Monica Boulevard. It contains drear echoing silences.

And over here—art. Art is nothing but beautiful. Art is like a black panther. It has the glamour of the desperado. Art is radical, the appealing cousin of crime. Never a dull moment with art. Morality, in this view, is not only its opposite but its enemy.

This claim of estrangement between morality and art retains its currency for an excellent reason: it's fun. It's agreeable for an artist to imagine himself as a Zarathustrian rope-dancer, balanced against eternity up in the ozone and thin light, while far below the eunuchs of the brown temple of morality whine platitudes at each other in the incense-ridden noonday darkness: "Look before you leap." "A stitch in time saves nine."

But let us pursue this notion. Let us imagine the novel, for example, freed completely from moral considerations. What would that be like? One thing it might be like is one of the anti-novels Robbe-Grillet gave us

Robert Stone's short story "Absence of Mercy" appeared in the November 1987 issue of Harper's Magazine. *He is at work on his fifth novel. This essay is based on a talk he gave recently at the New York Public Library, sponsored by the Book-of-the-Month Club.*

Illustration by Victoria Kann

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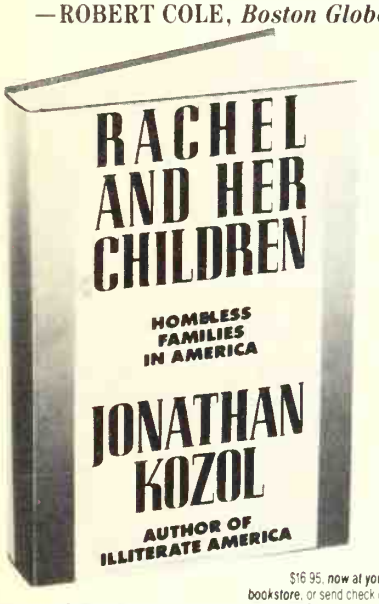

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during the 1950s and '60s. These are novels without any moral context, but they are similarly without characters and plots, beginnings and endings. Surely such an exercise in *doing without something* serves to reinforce the idea of its necessity. Is it possible to postulate the idea of a successful novel about people, or about animals for that matter, in which the living of life, as reflected therein, exists beyond the signal area of moral reference points?

What about the comic novel? Let's eliminate at the outset the obviously sentimental or political comedies that have a message (that is, a moral point) at their core. Let's take the work of two writers—William Burroughs and Evelyn Waugh—who have written very funny books and who are not usually thought of as kindly humanistic sages.

Naked Lunch is the prototypical Burroughs novel, and like all the others it's full of cruelty—not just sadism, but cruelty. The element of sci-fi political satire it contains is sometimes claimed as representing a moral dimension, but I think that's bogus. The moral element in the work of William Burroughs is in its very humor. In the grimmest imaginable places, in the grammar of drug addiction, in the violence and treachery of the addict's world, Burroughs finds laughter. The laughter itself is a primary moral response. Laughter represents a rebellion against chaos, a rejection of evil, and an affirmation of balance and soundness. One can see this principle at work in the way that laughter undercuts super-serious attempts at self-consciously "wicked" sex. I was once given a description of a waterfront S&M joint that presented itself as the meanest saloon on earth. There was a dress code, and patrons were expected to present to any observer nothing less than a grim mask of depravity. There were two house rules, according to my informant. The first was, no rugby shirts. The second was *no laughing*. We must assume that the people who run places like that know what they're doing.

Evelyn Waugh seems to have been lacking in all the qualities we philanthropists find congenial. A bully, a coward, a fascist, a despiser of minorities and the poor, a groveler before the rich and powerful, Waugh was surely one of the worst human beings ever to become a major novelist. But paradoxically, his life and work provide us with a ringing confirmation of the dependence of serious fiction on morality. By borrowing, spuriously or otherwise (it doesn't matter), the certainties of Catholicism, he was able to infuse his best work with the moral center that makes it great. The worldly lives described in the *Men at Arms* trilogy and *Brideshead Revisited* are constantly being measured against a rigorous neo-Jansenist Christianity. In these books the invisible world becomes the real one, and its meanings constitute the truth that undergirds the confusion of desires with which the characters struggle.

Gass's essay starts by having us ask ourselves whether we'd rescue an infant or a Botticelli painting, if we saw both of them being washed out to sea and could salvage only one. The Botticelli's a masterpiece, the baby's only a "potential" human being. After prescribing this antinomian exercise, he commences to deflate his own balloon by running it on the thorns of common sense. He refers to the author's historical struggle against censorship, as though this somehow establishes art's essentially unmoral character, and then admits that each censoring hierarchy reacts to whatever inadequacies of its moral system are challenged by the work in question. He reminds us that good books were written by bad people—bad people (and crafters of fine moral fiction) like Waugh, I assume. Then he ends with a truism to the effect that propaganda cannot justify bad art or bad writing.

There are few statements in the essay which Gass does not obviate or contradict, but there is one that stays, unforsworn and unqualified, in my recollection. He refers to Keats's identification of beauty with truth and vice versa as "a fatuous little motto." Now it seems to me that Gass is being unkind to a perfectly nice axiom; surely we should meditate for a moment on this most appealing sentiment. Isn't it true?

Concerning life, it is a question we cannot finally answer. I think it *tends* to be true. The explanation at the core of any one of nature's mysteries is often edifying. Job cuts through to the substance of it when he questions the beneficence of God. In the end he learns that God's majesty and holiness suffuse the universe. This is what the medieval mystic Julian of Norwich was referring to when she wrote "all shall be well and all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well." In terms of Western tradition it should be true that truth is beauty. Even if you take God out of it, the grimmest principles of existence have their symmetry. All the same, there can be a hundred different explanations for things and every one of them beautiful and none of them true.

But, in art, isn't it *always* true? Aren't truth and beauty very nearly the same? Surely every aesthetic response entails a recognition. What standard do we hold up to art, other than things themselves? And what do we require from art if not a reflection of things, of our lives, in all their variety?

We in the Western world are what the Moslems call "people of the book." The prototypical book in this culture has been the Bible, regardless of whether or not we are believers. After centuries of being Christians and Jews, our context and our perceptions continue to be conditioned by the Bible's narratives. It's hard to overestimate the impact of the Bible on our civilization and on our language. The novel came into existence with the rise of a literate mass readership, and the greatest vehicle of mass literacy in the English-speaking world has been the King James Bible. It has been the great primer. The Bible is unique among religious books in the relationship it defines between God and man, and in the view it takes of human life. The narratives about people in the books of the Bible are thought to mean something. They are thought to be significant. This implies that the corporeal world in which people live is not an illusion to be overcome, or a shadowland reflecting the void, but an instrument of God's will. For centuries we have been reflecting on peculiar things—

You deserve a factual look at . . .

Jerusalem

Whose city—whose "holy city" is it?

It's twenty years that the city of Jerusalem has been reunited under Israeli rule. But there is still much talk that solution of the "Middle East Problem" will not be possible until Israeli Jews relinquish their "occupation" and restore the holy city—or at the very minimum, its eastern part—to its "rightful owners", the Moslem Arabs.

What are the facts?

■ Before the end of the 1967 Six-Day War, during which the Israeli Defense Forces reconquered Jerusalem from the Jordanians, claims to Jerusalem being a Moslem holy city were rarely, if every, asserted. Jerusalem had always been a city in which many religions and nationalities lived side by side. It was only after the old city was back in Jewish hands that the Moslem Arabs declared their willingness to wage "jihad" (holy war) to bring the city back into Arab possession.

■ The notion to call Jerusalem an Islamic holy city has only come about in modern times and now has gained currency by dint of constant repetition. The basis for the claim is that Jerusalem does indeed contain an Islamic holy site, namely the Al Aksa Mosque. It's close to the place from which Mohammed is believed to have ascended to heaven. Mohammed never set foot in Jerusalem. But aware that it was the holy city of Christians and Jews, and wishing to convert them to his new religion, he commanded his followers to build a mosque in Jerusalem. In recognition of the city's holiness to Jews, Moslems built the Al Aksa Mosque. But never in Moslem history did this mosque compare in significance to the Moslem holy cities of Mecca and Medina—cities that no "infidel" may visit.

■ It's on the basis of this religious tradition that the Moslems designated the entire Jewish Temple Mount to be their holy site. The Israeli Government, in its constant spirit of accommodation to Moslem sensibilities, has largely acceded to this tradition and has put the area in and around the Al Aksa Mosque entirely under Moslem control. But how would Christians feel if, instead of from the Temple Mount, the Moslem tradition had Mohammed ascend from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and if the Moslem Arabs were to claim that site as their property? The Christian world, often ready to consent to Moslem claims against Jews and Israelis, would be greatly astonished. But Moslem Arab assertiveness doesn't end there. On the tenuous claim to the Temple Mount, they have construed a claim to the entire city of Jerusalem (or at the very least to its eastern part), which they have declared to be their "third holiest city." And it would be an insult to all Moslems and all Arabs to leave the city in the hands of the "infidel Jews".

■ But the city of Jerusalem—in contrast to Baghdad, Cairo, and Damascus—has never played any major role in the political and religious lives of the Moslem Arabs. It was never a political center, never even a provincial or sub-provincial capital. It was the site of one Moslem holy place, but otherwise a backwater to the Arabs. The passion for Jerusalem was not discovered by the Moslem Arabs until most recent history.

Jews are not the usurpers in Jerusalem. They have been living there since the Biblical era and have been the majority population since the 19th Century. Jews have holy sites in most cities of the world. But do they claim sovereignty over those cities because of it? Of course not! It would be preposterous. And the Moslem Arab claim to Jerusalem, based on the Al Aksa Mosque on the Temple Mount, is just as untenable. Jerusalem has been the center of Jewish life, of Jewish yearning, and of Jewish thinking for over 3000 years. That is the reason that the State of Israel has rededicated the Jewish holy city to be its indivisible capital.

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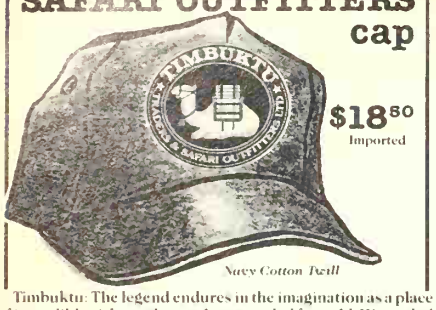

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like why Esau was disinherited, and how Abraham could have been ready to sacrifice his son—and asking ourselves: What does this mean? What is at the heart of this strange story? What can I learn from it? How does it bear on my situation?

All our philosophies of history descend from the assumptions bequeathed by our Scriptures: they profess to detect the informing principles at the heart of human events. Life matters, lives matter, because earthly human history is the arena in which the universe acts out its consciousness of itself, displaying its nature as creation. Human annals become charged, they become an entity: history. History then is perceived as a rational process, the unfolding of a design, something with a dynamic to be uncovered.

Stories explain the nature of things. Any fictional work of serious intent argues for the significance of its story. A reader holds the characters in judgment, investing sympathy or withholding it, always alert for recognitions, hoping to see his lonely state reflected across time, space, and circumstance. How then can fiction ever be independent of morality? To be so, it would have to be composed of something other than language.

There is no brown temple where morality resides. There is no high wire above it where the artist whirls in freedom. If there is a wire it's the wire we're all on out here, the one we live on, with only each other for company. Our having each other is both the good news and the bad.

We deceive ourselves, we contemporary people, if we imagine that beneath our feet is a great, sound structure, a vast warehouse called civilization, chock-a-block with boring, reliable truths and insights. Around us there is only deep space. Out here, where we all live with each other, it's mostly impromptu. Right-mindedness is cheap—but goodness? William Gass need not worry about its coming between ourselves and our pleasures.

Most journalists who worked in Vietnam during the war were oppressed by the extreme difficulty of translating what they saw into words. It was not necessarily that it was so uniquely horrible; it was only that the brutality and confusion one experienced seemed to lose something when rendered, when written. Somehow, in describing the situation so that it could be set up in columns of type, one always seemed to be cleaning it up.

As I pondered this process, a moment of illumination struck me. We are *forever* cleaning up our act. Not only in describing ourselves but in imagining ourselves, we project a self-image that is considerably idealized. In all our relationships, we present idealized versions of ourselves so as not to frighten others with our primary processes. And just as we individually cultivate an elevated image of ourselves, so we conspire as nations, peoples—as humankind—to create a fictional exemplar of our collective selves, ourselves as we have agreed to imagine ourselves.

But this is not the whole story. Though we are only what we are, we have the amazing ability to extend, to transcend the grimmest circumstances. Moments occur when we amaze each other with acts of hope, acts of courage that can make one proud to be human. The fact is that we absolutely require the elevated image of ourselves which we indulge. If we did not idealize ourselves, if we only accepted the reality of ourselves as we are most of the time, we would never be capable of the extensions of ourselves that are required of us.

Things are in the saddle, Emerson said, and ride mankind. "Whirl is king." Things happen ruthlessly, without mercy; the elemental force of things bears down upon us. From one moment to the next we hardly know what's going on, let alone what it all means. Civilization and its attendant morality are not structures, they're more like notions, and sometimes they can seem very distant notions. They can be blown away in a second. In the worst of times we often look for them in vain. Sometimes the morality to which we publicly subscribe seems so alien to our actual behavior that it seems to emanate from some other sphere. One might call it a fiction, but it's a fiction that we most urgently require. It is much more difficult to

act well than we are ready to admit. It can be extremely hard to act sensibly, let alone well.

Storytelling is not a luxury to humanity; it's almost as necessary as bread. We cannot imagine ourselves without it because each self is a story. The perception each of us has of his own brief transient passage through things is also a kind of fiction, not because its matter is necessarily untrue, but because we tend to shape it to suit our own needs. We tell ourselves our own stories selectively, in order to keep our sense of self intact. As dreams are to waking life, so fiction is to reality. The brain can't function without clearing its circuits during sleep, nor can we contemplate and analyze our situation without living some of the time in the world of the imagination, sorting and refining the random promiscuity of events.

If the practice of fiction is inextricably linked with concerns of morality, what is there to say about the writer's responsibility? The writer's responsibility, it seems to me, consists in writing well and truly, to use a Hemingwayesque locution. The writer who betrays his calling is that writer who either for commercial or political reasons vulgarizes his own perception and his rendering of it. Meretricious writing tries to conventionalize what it describes in order to make itself safer and easier to take. It may do this to conform to a political agenda, which is seen as somehow overriding mere literary considerations, or under commercial pressures to appeal to what are seen as the limitations of a mass audience.

The effect of conventionalized, vulgarized writing is pernicious. Fiction is, or should be, an act against loneliness, an appeal to community, a bet on the possibility of spanning the gulf that separates one human being from another. It must understand and illustrate the varieties of the human condition in order to bring more of that condition into the light of conscious insight. It is part of the process which expands human self-knowledge. Meretricious fiction does the opposite of what fiction is supposed to do. The reassurances it offers are superficial and empty. It presents a reality that is limited by its own impoverishment, and as a result, it increases each individual's loneliness and isolation. In the absence of honest storytelling, people are abandoned to the beating of their own hearts.

It must be emphasized that the moral imperative of fiction provides no excuse for smug moralizing, religiosity, or propaganda. On the contrary, it forbids them. Nor does it require that every writer equip his work with some edifying message advertising progress, brotherhood, and light. It does not require a writer to be a good man, only a good wizard.

Above all, what I wish to argue is that the laws of both language and art impose choices that are unavoidably moral. The first law of heaven is that nothing is free. This is the law that requires the artist to constantly make decisions, to choose between symmetry and asymmetry, restraint and excess, balance and imbalance. Because this law is ruthlessly self-enforcing in art, the quality of the artist's work will depend on his making the right decision. The same law operates the scales the blindfolded woman in the courthouse holds. Artistic quality is related to justice. Grammar is related to logic, which is the engine of conscience.

Language is always morally weighted. Nothing is free.

Political situations have always attracted me as a subject, and not because I believe that political pathology is necessarily more "important" than private suffering. During times of political upheaval, the relationship between external "reality" and the individual's interior world is destabilized. Revolutions, wars—such upheavals liberate some people from the prison of the self, even as they invite others to play out their personal dramas on a larger stage. People caught up in things that transcend the personal forever bring their own needs and desires to bear. They make pleasant and unpleasant discoveries about each other and themselves. The elements of drama descend on ordinary people and ordinary lives.

I wrote my first book after spending a year in the Deep South, a time that happened to coincide with the first sit-ins and the beginning of the struggle against segregation and also with the reaction to it. The novel centered on the exploitation of electronic media by the extreme Right, a phenomenon which we have not altogether put behind us. *A Hall of Mirrors* was not a strictly "realistic" book, but as young writers will, I put every single thing I thought I knew into it. I gave my characters names with the maximum number of letters because I thought that would make them more substantial. I had taken America as my subject, and all my quarrels with America went into it.

A few years later, working in Vietnam, I found myself witnessing a mistake ten thousand miles long, a mistake on the American scale. I began to write a novel set in Saigon. As it progressed, I realized that the logic of the thing required that everybody make his or her way back home, into the America of the early 1970s. The early to mid-'70s still seem to me, in retrospect, like a creepy, evil time. A lot of bills from the '60s were coming up for presentation. *Dog Soldiers* was my reaction to the period.

I went to Central America in 1978 to go scuba diving while at work on a new novel, and returned to the region several times thereafter. I became acquainted with a few Americans working there. At that time relatively few people in this country knew where Huehuetenango was, and Managua, Nicaragua, was the title of an old Andrews Sisters song. The Somozas had been running Nicaragua for many years and they seemed quite secure in their power—at least to my touristic eyes. Everything was quiet there. One day I even semi-crashed a party at the Presidential Palace.

The palace stood in the middle of what was literally a fallen city. From a distance, downtown Managua looked like a park—it was so green. When you got a closer look you could see that the green was that of vegetation growing over the rubble where the center of the city had collapsed two days before Christmas in 1972. The palace stood unscathed in the middle of the destruction. Around it was a kind of free-fire zone of scrub jungle where no one was permitted. The palace stood just beyond the effective mortar distance from the nearest habitation.

During my trips to Central America, I began to make a point of listening to as many stories as I could. After a while the stories began to form a pattern that conformed to my sense of Mesoamerica's history. This band of republics between the Andes and the Grijalva seemed placed by its gods in a very fateful situation. The region seemed to have attracted the most violent conquistadors and the most fanatical inquisitors. When they arrived, the Spaniards found holy wells of human sacrifice. Here, racial and social oppression had always been most severe. The fertile soil of the place seemed to bring forth things to provoke the appetite rather than things to nourish—baubles and rich toys, plantation crops for your sweet tooth or for your head.

These lands were eventually yoked to labor-intensive, high-profit products, bananas, of course, and coffee, chocolate, tobacco, chicle, emeralds, marijuana, cocaine. I decided to put down the book I was writing and begin a new one. My subject was again America; the United States had been involved here for so long. The new novel became my third, *A Flag for Sunrise*.

Children of Light, a novel about the movies published in 1986, is also political, in my view. The process of creating Hollywood movies is loaded with examples of how America works. People in the film industry who see *Children of Light* as an attack on movie-making apparently fail to see how movie-struck and reverent it really is.

I do not claim to know much more about novels than the writing of them, but I cannot imagine one set in the breathing world which lacks any moral valence. In the course of wringing a few novels from our *fin-de-siècle*, late-imperial scene, I have never been able to escape my sense of humanity trying, with difficulty, to raise itself in order not to fall. I insist on disputing William Gass's claim that goodness knows nothing of beauty. Nor do I believe that, in his excellent fiction and lucid criticism, he practices the ideas he expressed in his essay of that name.

Just as it's impossible to avoid standards of human action in novels about people, it's difficult to avoid politics. But if a novelist openly accepts that his work must necessarily contain moral and political dimensions, what responsibilities does he take on?

He assumes, above all, the responsibility to understand. The novel that admits to a political dimension requires a knowledge, legitimately or illegitimately acquired, intuitive or empirical, of the situation that is its subject. Political commitment is not required, although eventually most authors maneuver themselves into a stand. I think the key is to establish the connection between political forces and individual lives. The questions to address are: How do social and political forces condition individual lives? How do the personal qualities of the players condition their political direction?

The novelist has to cast the net of his sympathies fairly wide. He should be able to imagine his way into the personae of many different people, with different ways of thinking and believing. The aspiring, overtly political novelist might spend a little time every morning meditating on the interior life of General Noriega, a man who actually exists. As far as political satire goes, it should be remembered that the best satire requires a certain subversive sympathy for one's subject.

The writer must remember the first law of heaven: nothing is free. Commitment can be useful because it brings a degree of passion to bear, but it's also dangerous. To be the contented partisan of one side or another, one has to sell something. Because so much of serious politics in this century has to do with violence, this can be a morally enervating exercise. Moral enervation is bad for writers. Above all, the writer must not sentimentalize. He must remember that sentimentality is the great enemy of genuine sentiment.

I believe that it is impossible for any novelist to find a subject other than the transitory nature of moral perception. The most important thing about people is the difficulty they have in identifying and acting upon what's right. The world is full of illusion. We carry nemesis inside us, but we are not excused.

Years ago, a whimsical friend of mine made up a little ditty that for me sums up the backwards-and-forwards tragi-comical nature of humanity's march. It's a highly moral little ditty and it may contain the essence of every work of serious literature ever written. It goes like this:

Of offering more than what we can deliver, we have a bad habit it is true.

But we have to offer more than what we can deliver to be able to deliver what we do. ■

June Index Sources

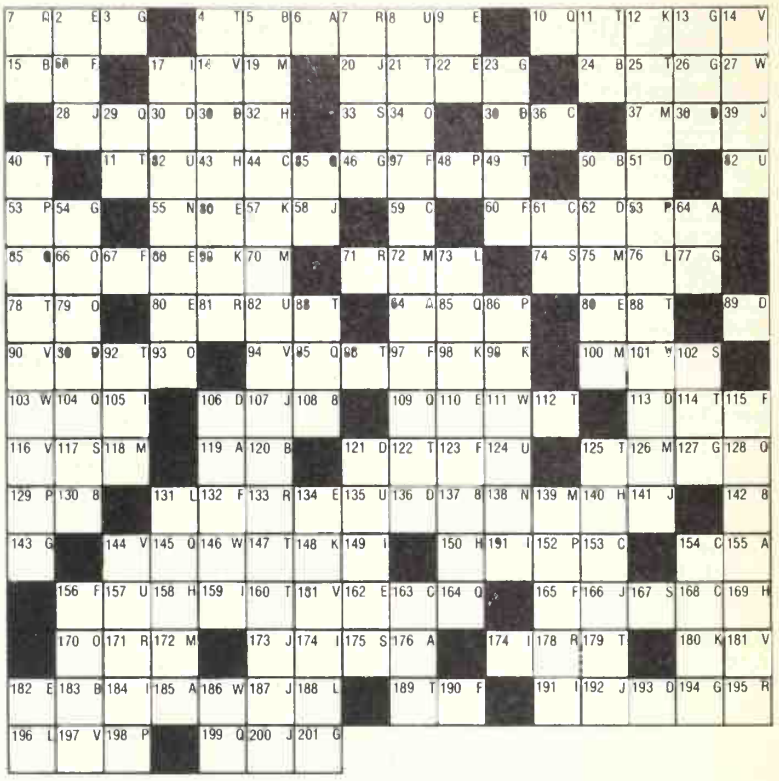
1 Bureau of the Census/Senate Armed Services Committee; **2,3** Daniel Yankelovich Group (N.Y.C.); **4** Federal Highway Administration; **5** General Accounting Office; **6,7** Defense Budget Project (Washington); **8** National Security Archive (Washington); **9** American Manufacturers Export Group (Houston); **10,11** Stephano Archetti, *Europeo* (Milan, Italy); **12** *Economist*/MORI survey (London); **13** Irish Information Partnership (London); **14** Department of State; **15** Committee to Protect Journalists (N.Y.C.); **16** Conservation International (Washington); **17** Norman Farnsworth, University of Illinois (Chicago); **18** American Medical Association (Chicago); **19** Department of Justice; **20** CBS News (N.Y.C.); **21** Lawrence M. Kahn and Peter D. Sherer, University of Illinois (Urbana, Illinois); **22** Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity (Chicago); **23** National Interfraternity Conference (Indianapolis)/National Panhellenic Conference (Indianapolis); **24** Solters/Roskin/Friedman (Los Angeles); **25** Dunkin' Donuts University (Braintree, Mass.); **26** Home School Legal Defense Association (Great Falls, Va.); **27** David Janda, University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, Mich.)/Centers for Disease Control (Atlanta); **28** National Golf Foundation (Jupiter, Fla.); **29** Neckwear Association of America (N.Y.C.); **30** Guilherme Costa Manso, *Veja* (São Paulo, Brazil); **31** Consumer Product Safety Commission; **32** Beverage Marketing Corporation (N.Y.C.); **33** Gallup Organization (Princeton, N.J.); **34** Rocky Mountain Institute (Old Snowmass, Colo.); **35** Alpo Petfood (Allentown, Pa.); **36,37** Creative Programming (N.Y.C.); **38** Adult Video Association (Los Angeles)/Video Software Dealers Association (Marlton, N.J.); **39** Decision Research (Lexington, Mass.); **40** Dominic Dicenzo, *Backstreets* (Seattle).

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 66

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 79.



CLUES

A. Dame May ——, Eng. actress (1865–1948)

176 6 119 185 155
64

B. Petty, trifling

142 130 183 137 24
108 50 120 35
31 15 101 5

C. Pertaining to the shore of a lake, sea, or ocean

163 154 168 36 61 44 59 153

D. Imaginary, unreal

51 89 106 113 30 121 84 193
62 136

E. River flowing from the Blue Ridge Mountains of Va. SE to Chesapeake Bay

22 110 134 68 56 2 87 182
162 47 9 80

F. Not to be appeased; merciless

132 67 97 115 41 156 123 165
60 190

G. Hurtful; poisonous

77 23 46 3 127 201 194 13
26 54 143

H. Provisions

150 43 140 158 32 169

I. British army captain (1730–89) who sided with the Americans, was convicted of treason, escaped, and joined the American army

177 105 159 149 17 184 174 191

J. One and all (3 wds.)

166 187 58 200 52 20 39 141
28 107 192 173

K. Shifty, slippery, tricky

98 12 18 180 148 57 69

L. Small ornamental mats

131 76 161 16 196 188 73

M. Disloyal; double-crossing

37 118 100 139 72 126 70 75
172 19

N. Hustler, sizzler

55 45 138 63 38 151 65

O. Calcified canine

95 170 66 128 79 34 1 93

P. Complains

48 89 53 152 198 129 86

Q. Activity for Jesse James and Robin Hood, e.g.

104 29 85 145 199 109 10 164

R. Ideas, views

178 195 91 7 71 171 81 133

S. Foolish affection

102 175 33 167 74 117

T. 1908 J. M. Barrie comedy (4 wds.)

83 122 160 78 11 147 4 125
49 179 25 96 114 40
112 88 21 189 92

U. Indolent; futile; superfluous

135 124 8 82 42 157

V. Inspires repugnance in

90 181 14 197 116 94 144

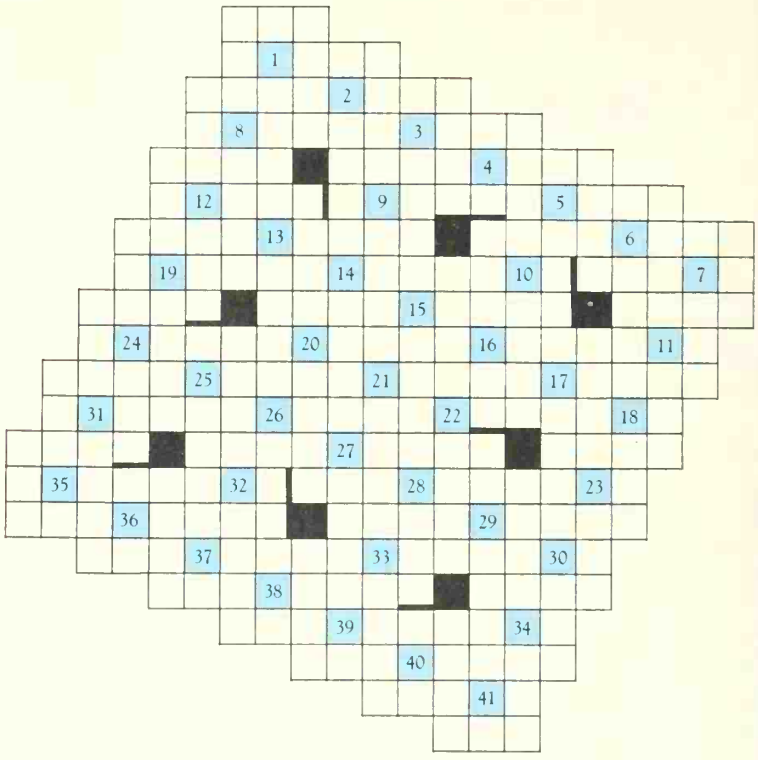
W. Quotidian

27 146 186 111 103

PUZZLE

Eight to the Bar

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.



Music appreciation month—all clues have a musical theme.

All clue answers are eight letters long. Each is to be entered in the eight squares "circling" its numbered square, with the starting square and the direction to be deduced from interlocking entries. Eight unclued thematic entries likewise circle the black squares, with the bar lines indicating the starting (and ending) points. The four unchecked letters from each of the corner entries can be rearranged to say, as E. B. Browning did, MUSIC SOARS WITHIN.

Clue answers include four proper names, and an uncommon word at 27. One of the theme words is a two-word phrase. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 79.

Clues

1. Sondheim is no Mercer . . . (there's an error in there somewhere)
2. Number 501 taken by woodwinds . . . they're inconsequential
3. Indirect, unfinished idea left in tune
4. Take the lead from Brünnhilde in awful loud Ring, playing for old money
5. Contract to let English reinterpret blues as in forefront
6. Produce contemporary piano parts: "La Mer" and others (*two words*)
7. Relish Schubert's second, and how . . . that goes double!
8. Strange men come after head of Curtis Institute
9. Awful quality heard in Kurt's music?
10. Calloway left back competition with San Francisco bell-ringer (*two words*)
11. Band leader put energy into reorganizing choirs to get bread from the Continent
12. Stages a bit of Delius in fouled-up score
13. Jittery, untried drummer initially came in at the wrong time
14. "Suppressed Laughter" is Kern's, rewritten to protect copyright
15. They cheat second string players
16. He sells me rare plainsong
17. More warm of voice, as Torme and Southern
18. Crosby absorbs lines, looking casual-like
19. Fluted embellishments ruined road song
20. Black arts practitioners to be in conflict with *Hair*
21. Plays the violin on trip at sea—and for a ship it's outstanding
22. Old photos showing true rebuilt spinet without year
23. American artist and singer who forgot the words?
24. "LEAD IN *MIKADO*, EXPERIENCED IN G&S"—cast items
25. Gee, Torme's upset about minute protection for openings
26. He chokes, forgetting bit of lyrics in "New Girl in Town," perhaps?
27. Stealing number, barrels in with last note?
28. Holding in terrible ache, singer turns white
29. Prerequisite to German I: smooth the ending of *Yellow Submarine*
30. Tear into a balcony at the Met to be more up-to-date
31. In uniform Latin . . . that is, in an arrangement of Verdi
32. U.S. natives in *Dames at Sea* holding first of rehearsals
33. Greenery used in "Barcarole" and *Ernani*
34. Most into the blues? Some do it badly
35. Our time's off . . . could be the humidity
36. Tenor, deteriorating in an advanced degree, left city up north
37. Relieved, wrote music about upper-class Catholic
38. Unable to produce halfway infectious sound, so leaves
39. Shun Wagner's magnum opus, scoffing
40. Howl more horribly in opening in "Trees"?
41. "*Norma* is awfully masculine": offensive description of the Catholic Church

Contest Rules: Send completed diagram with name and address to "Eight to the Bar," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's Magazine*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. Winners' names will be printed in the August issue. Winners of the April puzzle, "Dress Circle," are Rueben Goldman, Seattle, Washington; Nancy E. Siirola, Salt Lake City, Utah; and James W. Gawboy, Ely, Minnesota.

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